POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF THE

Rev. THOMAS ADAM,

Late Rector of WINTRINGHAM.

In THREE VOLUMES.

S. Bradburn.

1786.

VOLUME I.

CONTAINING HIS

PRIVATE THOUGHTS ON RELIGION,

AND

SERMONS on different SUBJECTS.

To which is prefixed

A Short SKETCH of his LIFE and CHARACTER.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them——Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance, 2 Pet. chap. i. ver. 13—15.

YORK:

PRINTED BY A. WARD, AND SOLD BY J. BUCKLAND, PATER-NOSTER-ROW; C. DILLY, IN THE POULTRY; AND J. MATTHEWS, IN THE STRAND, LONDON; BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS IN YORK; AND T. BROWNE, HULL.

MDCCLXXXVI.

Samuel Bradburn.

In the Gift of

The Right Honourable

Lady Mary Fitzgerald.

Decr. 18. 1786.

CONTENTS.

Page

Life of the Author — i
Preface — xxxix

Private Thoughts on Religion.

CHAP. I. Confeſſions — 1
CHAP. II. The Scriptures — 42
CHAP. III. God — 50
CHAP. IV. Human Depravity — 60
CHAP. V. Repentance — 102
CHAP. VI. Jeſus Chriſt — 115
CHAP. VII. Faith — 124
CHAP. VIII. Good Works — 156
CHAP. IX. Chriſtian Life — 162
CHAP. X. Charity — 208
CHAP. XI. Reſignation — 220
CHAP. XII. Prayer — 234
CHAP. XIII. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper 239
CHAP. XIV. Paſtoral Office — 243
CHAP. XV. Heaven — 247
CHAP. XVI. Miſcellaneous — 251

SERMON I. 25

PSALM xxxii. 5, 6.

I will acknowledge my ſin unto thee, and mine unrighteouſneſs have I not hid: I ſaid, I will confeſs my ſins unto the Lord, and ſo thou forgaveſt the wickedneſs of my ſin.

SERMON

SERMON. II. 277

ISAIAH ix. 6.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder.

SERMON III. 293

ISAIAH ix. 6.

And his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace.

SERMON IV. 311

MATTHEW v. 10.

Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

SERMON V. 329

GAL. iii. 10.

Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

This Volume may be had ſeparate by thoſe who chooſe it.

A

SHORT SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE and CHARACTER of the AUTHOR.

THE Rev. THOMAS ADAM, author of the following works, was born at Leeds, in the Weſt-Riding of Yorkſhire, Feb. 25, 1701; his father, Mr. Henry Adam, was of the Profeſſion of the Law, and Town-Clerk of that Corporation. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Jaſper Blythman, Eſq;* Recorder there, by whom he had ſix children, Jaſper, Henry, Thomas, Katherine, Elizabeth, and Sibyl.

Our Author, Thomas, was firſt put to the publick Grammar-School in that town, under the care of the pious and worthy Mr. Thomas Barnard †, then Head-Maſter of that School, and afterwards to the School at Wakefield; from whence, about the uſual time of life, he went to Chriſt's College, Cambridge. But, after he had reſided there about two years, he removed to Hart-Hall (now Hertford College) in Oxford, under

* "Elizabeth, the mother of Jaſper Blythman, Eſq; Recorder "of Leeds, was one of the twenty children of Sir John Stanhope, "which were born and baptized (beſides two which were ſtill-"born) before either he or his Lady were forty years of age."

† Author of the Life and Character of Lady Elizabeth Haſtings.

the care of that famous diſciplinarian, Dr. Newton, (Head of that Seminary, and its Founder as a College) for whoſe memory in that capacity he ever retained the higheſt reſpect.

He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts only, as he had imbibed the doctrine of the indefenſible nature of pluralities from Dr. Newton, whoſe maſterly Treatiſe on that ſubject is well known; and therefore concluded it a needleſs expence for him to proceed any farther in academical degrees.

By the intereſt of an uncle, a perſon of ſome eminence in his Profeſſion of the Law, and who had been of ſingular ſervice to the family of the Patron, about the year 1724 he was preſented to the living of Wintringham, in Lincolnſhire, of which he continued Rector fifty-eight years; but not being of age to take poſſeſſion, it was held for him by a friend for about a year.

Not long after he ſettled at Wintringham, his Uncle, who ſeemed much ſet upon the advancement of ſo promiſing a Nephew, urged him greatly to come up to London *to ſhew himſelf*, as he termed it, concluding this to be the moſt likely way to recommend him to the favor of thoſe who were moſt able to advance him in the world: But when Mr. Adam underſtood that his view was to put him in the way of more preferment, he was ſo far from embracing this advantageous propoſal, that he thought it his duty to decline the invitation in as civil a manner as he could, at the ſame time returning

returning for anſwer, *that it was incumbent upon him to be with his flock at Wintringham*; an anſwer which gave great offence to his Uncle, as it fruſtrated all his well-meant ſchemes for his promotion and advancement in the Church.

Nor did he ever afterwards depart from the ſame diſintereſted determination to refuſe all additional preferment.

When Dr. Thomas was promoted to the Biſhoprick of Lincoln, our Author, whoſe good behaviour at the Univerſity had gained him the eſteem of his governors there, was ſtrongly recommended by them to his peculiar notice, as one whom he would find more eſpecially deſerving, amongſt his Clergy, of his attention and regard. And it is very probable that we find him, in conſequence of this, appointed to preach before his Lordſhip at Gainſborough, at his Primary Viſitation there. But how much ſoever the Biſhop might be at any time diſpoſed to befriend him, he gave him to underſtand that he was perfectly ſatisfied with what he at preſent had, then not quite 200 l. per annum, nor ever meant to engage in any ſecond charge.

Not many years after his coming to Wintringham, Mr. Adam thought proper to change his ſtate of life, by marrying Suſanna, the eldeſt daughter of the Rev. Mr. Cooke, Vicar of the neighbouring pariſh of Roxby, by whom he had one only daughter, who died in her infancy; and,

after having lived together with much comfort during thirty years or more, in the year 1760, he was called upon to reſign this deareſt earthly treaſure into His hands from whom he had received her. How greatly he was affected by this loſs, and the truly chriſtian manner in which he bore it, will be beſt ſhewn by a Meditation * on the ſubject, found amongſt his papers, in his own hand-writing, after his deceaſe.

There is nothing in our Author's Hiſtory, after this period, which calls for particular notice. An unintereſting ſameneſs of events muſt almoſt neceſſarily attend a life paſſed in the obſcure ſhade of country retirement. We ſhall therefore dwell upon thoſe parts of his character as a Miniſter and a Chriſtian, which may furniſh ſome conſiderations not unworthy of regard and imitation.

From the account which has been already given of Mr. Adam's faithful attachment to his pariſh at Wintringham, and his determined refuſal of all additional preferment, it is natural for the reader to ſuppoſe that he was peculiarly diligent amongſt his people, and inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon for the converſion and ſalvation of their ſouls. But this does not by any means appear to have been the caſe *at that time:* For, though he was very exact and regular in the diſcharge of all the publick parts of his office, and his ſermons had even then a zeal and fervor in them beyond the generality; yet, as he himſelf afterwards obſerved

* See No. IV. Appendix.

ſerved to a particular friend, " neither his life " nor his doctrine could be of any peculiar uſe " to them, for he lived in a conformity to the " world, and his doctrine was *contrary to the croſs* " *of Chriſt.*" *

We find in his private reflections (which make a part of his works now ſubmitted to the publick) a remark of his own which will fully ſhew his judgment of the caſe on the review of it many years afterwards.

" Intruſion into the Miniſtry for worldly ends, " and abſolute unfitneſs for it;—in great igno- " rance of Chriſt;—great unconcern for the ſalva- " tion of ſouls;—conſequent ſloth and remiſſneſs; " ſquandering a large income in ſenſual pleaſure; " and when I was ſomething awakened, doing " what I did in ſelf-dependance and ſelf-ſeeking, " How awful!"

How long it was after his entrance into the Miniſtry, before it pleaſed God to give him a clearer inſight into his own ſtate, and the nature of his calling, we cannot exactly determine; tho' it ſeems probable that his conſcience ſoon began to be not fully ſatisfied. All that we can gather on this head with certainty, is, that he received his firſt impreſſions of a ſerious kind from the writings –

* Leſt this expreſſion ſhould appear in any degree obſcure to ſome of our readers, we would obſerve, that what Mr. Adam meant by it, was, that he was not preaching Chriſt crucified as the foundation of man's hope for pardon and juſtification with God, but man's righteouſneſs, thus making the croſs of Chriſt of no effect.

writings of the Myſtics, particularly from the works of Mr. Law *, which appears to be farther confirmed by the peculiar intimacy which he is well known to have had for many years, in the middle part of his life, with ſome Miniſters of theſe ſentiments.

In this ſtate he continued ſeveral years, greatly harraſſed in his mind and conſcience; and though now more earneſt reſpecting both his own ſoul and thoſe of his people, yet a ſtranger to real peace, and full of continual doubts and fears. He ſaw indeed the Law to be holy, juſt, and good, but found, after all his utmoſt care and endeavour to fulfil it, he fell ſo ſhort of its demands, and was ſo ſinful, that he was continually under its righteous condemnation.

It was not till about the year 1748 that his mind gained any effectual relief. While he continued a diſciple of Mr. Law, though growing in a conviction of his ſinfulneſs, and becoming more ſtrict and ſerious, yet ſtill he could gain no ſolid peace of conſcience. All his ſtricteſt mortifications,

* The writings of Mr. Law ſeem to be principally uſeful in this reſpect. They are admirably calculated to awaken the conſcience, and beget in the mind of the reader a conviction of the futility of nominal profeſſion, and mere decency of conduct, and have in them ſuch a ſtrength of eaſy reaſoning, level to every capacity, as almoſt irreſiſtibly wins the reader's aſſent to the neceſſity of vital religion. I muſt beg leave therefore to differ from thoſe who would utterly diſcard them, and to aſſert, that we have not perhaps in the language a more maſterly performance in its way, or a book better calculated to promote a concern about religion, than *Mr. Law's Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life.* Probatum eſt. S. B.

tions, or multiplied exact performance of duties were over-ruled by the more ſtrict law of God, whoſe divine ſpirituality he could not attain to perfectly, nor ſave himſelf from its juſt condemnation. In this ſituation, therefore, his ſoul was in great diſtreſs; and that which ſerved to heighten it the more was, that he ſaw the word of God, inſtead of giving him any ground of comfort againſt his fears, was, on the contrary, in many places fully againſt him. Amongſt the reſt, *the Epiſtle to the Romans* was particularly offenſive and diſtreſſing to him in this view. He perceived that it evidently ſtruck at and overthrew the very foundation of his hope, and (as he then ſuppoſed) made no account of a life of ſuperior piety and godlineſs. As he was at this time ignorant of *God's righteouſneſs, and of any other way of ſalvation* than by the merit of his own goodneſs, the levelling ſtrain of the Apoſtle was, in a very high degree, grating to his ſelf-righteous pride. He could not bear to ſee thoſe that were eſteemed good men treated only as ſinners, and all their beſt righteouſneſs paſſed by as of no account towards their juſtification. Hence he was ſenſible that St. Paul taught a very different doctrine from that which he held and preached; and that they were directly contrary to each other in the important article of man's juſtification and acceptance in the ſight of God: For being poſſeſſed of much good ſenſe and unfeigned honeſty of heart, (a leading feature in his character all thro' life) and being truly deſirous to know, and to teach his people the real truth of God's word, he would

would not ſuffer his conſcience to be pacified and laid aſleep with the too common way of perſuading himſelf that both He and the Apoſtle meant, in reality, the ſame thing, though they evidently appeared ſo oppoſite; neither could he bear the thoughts of being a Teacher of falſe doctrine to the people committed to his charge, and that in a point of ſuch eſſential conſequence. Like a worthy and diligent Miniſter of God, therefore, and a faithful Paſtor of his flock, he was determined to take all poſſible pains to inform himſelf clearly on the ſubject: To this end he applied himſelf with all his power to every probable ſource of information. Hammond, Whitby, Grotius, with other of the moſt eminent commentators, were conſulted with the utmoſt care and attention;—but all in vain. Theſe gave him no relief *. He found they underſtood the caſe no better than himſelf, and was amazed to ſee men of ſenſe and underſtanding take pains to impoſe upon themſelves and others, by labouring to no purpoſe, with much expence of learning and argument, to reconcile things ſo diametrically oppoſite,

* From much experience and obſervation, it was the advice of Mr. Adam, to young divines eſpecially, not to be too forward in taking their ſenſe of the Scriptures from Commentators: And we will venture to aſſert the juſtice of the caution.——If it be aſked, Where then can we go in caſes of difficulty? It is anſwered,—Where Mr. Adam went, i. e. *to God in Prayer*; comparing one part of the word of God with another, and humbly looking to *Him* for his teaching and direction. Let this be duly tried, and we doubt not its ſucceſs will prove the ſoundneſs of the obſervation. A clear inſight will then be often given into the true ſenſe by ſuch a ſatisfactory ſolution as no comment can afford, and our faith ſtand not in the wiſdom of man, but in the power of God. Pſalm cxix. 18.—John vi. 45.—James i. 5.

oppoſite, and to unite two ſyſtems which it is the profeſſed deſign and intention of the Apoſtle to oppoſe to each other, and to ſhew their neceſſary and irreconcileable contradiction. Rom. xi. 6.

In this ſituation of things he went on for ſome time, determined not to give up the point without obtaining full ſatisfaction, tho' to all appearance no nearer than when he firſt began, and even perplexed more and more. He could not ſuppoſe indeed that St. Paul could be wrong, being perſuaded of the divine inſpiration which attended his writings, or that things which he had written were indeed unintelligible, much leſs that he would really inculcate or encourage licentiouſneſs of life. Like a truly ſenſible man he began to ſuſpect that the fault muſt be in himſelf, and in the ſyſtem which he had adopted, and that he had not properly conſidered the Apoſtle's doctrine with all its connexions and relations: Leaving therefore the bewildering guidance of Commentators and Expoſitors, he betook himſelf to the Fountain of all Knowledge, beſeeching God himſelf to teach and direct him. *

* While our Author's mind was thus affected, many of his friends and acquaintance feared leſt he was going out of his ſenſes, through too great ſtudy and care about religion.——This is nothing uncommon. The little attention which moſt people give to their ſouls, and the ſlight views which they have of the evil of ſin, together with their lamentable ignorance of the great truths of God's word, make them form that ſuſpicion of all who begin ſeriouſly to conſider the infinite importance of theſe things, and to feel their weight; whereas it is only the juſt and natural effect of a right conviction of ſin.—What ſhould call for our diſtreſſing grief, if ſin againſt God does not? Or what ſhould engage all

One morning in his ſtudy, being much diſtreſſed on the ſubject, he fell down upon his knees before God in prayer, ſpread his caſe before the Divine Majeſty and Goodneſs, implored him to pity his diſtreſs, and to guide him by his *Holy Spirit* into the right underſtanding of his own truth. When he aroſe from his ſupplication, he took the Greek Teſtament and ſat himſelf down to read the ſix firſt chapters of the Epiſtle to the Romans, ſincerely deſirous to be taught of God, and to receive, in the ſimplicity of a child, the word of *his revelation*; when, to his unſpeakable comfort and aſtoniſhment, his difficulties vaniſhed;—a moſt clear and ſatisfactory light was given him into this great ſubject:—He ſaw the doctrine of juſtification by Jeſus Chriſt alone thro' faith to be the great ſubject of the Goſpel;—the higheſt diſplay of the divine perfections;—the happieſt relief for his burthened conſcience;—and the moſt powerful principle of all conſtant and unfeigned holineſs of heart and life. He was rejoiced exceedingly; found peace and comfort ſpring up in his mind; his conſcience was purged from guilt through the atoning blood of Chriſt, and his heart ſet

all our anxiety equally with a concern how we may obtain pardon, and recover the divine favor? Our Author was loſt here.—The means which he had tried were ineffectual.——His own ſoul and his people's were at ſtake; and till this great difficulty was ſolved, it is no wonder that his mind could find no reſt. Whoever conſults the Scriptures will find that there is nothing new in ſuch circumſtances. Pſalms vi. xxxii.—lxxvii.—cxxx.—with many other parts, will ſhew a ſimilar ſituation of things in the minds of the true ſervants of God in thoſe times, nor has it been otherwiſe in any age of the church; and we may venture to aſſert, that *this madneſs* (if ſuch it be called) is far wiſer than the wiſdom of the world.

ſet at liberty to run the way of God's commandments without fear, in a ſpirit of filial love and holy delight; and from that hour he began to preach ſalvation *through faith in Jeſus Chriſt alone*, to man, by nature and practice loſt, and condemned under the Law, and, as his own expreſſion is, *Always a Sinner*. *

His ſermons, tho' before animated by an honeſt zeal, were no longer mere lectures of morality, or filled only with legal condemnation. While all godlineſs in principle and practice was duly enforced, the enlivening diſplay of that glorious Saviour, whoſe worth and excellence he had now taſted, and who was become all his ſalvation and all his deſire, ſeaſoned every diſcourſe.

Thoſe excellent and ſearching Lectures on the Church Catechiſm, which have met with the general approbation of good men, and have paſſed through ſeveral editions, and which diſcover, in ſo eminent a manner, the able Divine and the experienced Chriſtian, were the early fruit of this alteration in his views of Chriſtianity. A happy evidence of the great benefit which he had hereby received, and of his earneſt zeal and ability to communicate it for the advantage of others.

* In gratitude to God for his great mercy in opening his eyes, as well as to aſſiſt ſuch of his fellow-creatures as might be in his caſe; he afterwards, in the year 1771, publiſhed a paraphraſe of the eleven firſt chapters of the Epiſtle to the Romans, (in which all the doctrinal part is contained) where the reader will find the whole ſcheme of our redemption laid open in a moſt clear and maſterly manner, with many excellent improvements and obſervations.

About the time that this change took place he ſtumbled (to uſe his own expreſſion in the caſe) on ſome of the writings of that famous champion of the reformation, Martin Luther. If he had ſeen theſe in his former ſtate, when he was well contented with his own righteouſneſs, we may juſtly ſuppoſe he would at once have rejected them with the utmoſt diſdain and abhorrence, as the very quinteſſence of Antinomianiſm; and however he might reverence St. Paul, as being an inſpired Apoſtle, would have made no heſitation to have ſpurned them from him, as contrary to the Goſpel of Chriſt, and ſubverſive of all true godlineſs. This many, doubtleſs, have done thro' want of the ſame divine teaching reſpecting their real ſtate, of which Mr. Adam was now happily become the ſubject. But his mind being now brought down, and, by the diſcipline of the Law, convincing him deeply of his ſinfulneſs, even in his beſt ſtate, he was ſo far from being offended at the boldneſs of expreſſion * and freedom of ſentiment

* It will readily be allowed, that there are in the writings of Martin Luther ſome expreſſions, which ſeem to favour of Antinomianiſm, and from which imputation it would be very difficult to defend them againſt a critical ſcrutiny:—But that they were never meant in that light is evident, not only from their admitting of a very different ſenſe when candidly conſidered with their context, but from Luther's writings againſt the Anabaptiſts of his times on this very account.

The genius and temper of the writer muſt be conſidered, as well as the age in which he lived, and the fundamental errors which he combated. He was a plain blunt man, and had an averſion to thoſe ſoftenings which are ſo faſhionable in the preſent day, and thought they would injure the force of what he ſaid, and make it leſs pointed againſt thoſe errors which he had it in his heart to demoliſh. And although ſuch bold ſtrokes may give offence

ment which he there met with, that he perceived them to be the very thing which his ſoul wanted, and the doctrine of St. Paul; and that however many may affect to admire the one, who yet at the ſame time reject and make light of the other, they muſt, in reality, ſtand or fall together; ſince they both ſpeak one and the ſame thing, and all the objections which are prudentially brought againſt the Reformer, lie equally in all their force againſt the inſpired Apoſtle alſo, and againſt the doctrine which he ſo ſtrenuouſly inculcates.

This celebrated writer, therefore, was always his peculiar favourite, and often would he, with much thankfulneſs to God, and gratitude of heart, acknowledge to his friends the ſingular help which he found from his writings, particularly from his excellent comment on the Epiſtle to the Galatians, highly recommending it to their ſerious peruſal, for its admirable uſe and truly evangelical doctrine. *

In

offence to thoſe that feel nothing of this real want of a Saviour: yet they that know the urgency of their caſe like Mr. Adam, will find them the only remedy that can reach their diſorder. And while the cold enervated exactneſs of the wiſe and prudent affords them no relief, this will be a balm to their wounded conſciences, and the richeſt cordial to their fainting ſouls. And may we not add that the divine bleſſing which has in all ages attended Luther's works, is no inconſiderable argument in favour of their truth and ſoundneſs?

* From the deficiency of our ſources of information reſpecting Mr. Adam, in this part of his life, it is very difficult to know how to arrange the two laſt-mentioned circumſtances. Of the facts themſelves we are certain, but cannot poſitively affirm that we relate them in their exact order as to time, nor indeed is it very material.

In this bleſſed and happy faith of the Goſpel he went on from this time to the very end of his days, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things by his truly chriſtian life and converſation: Nor did increaſing years, experience, and reading give him any ground to alter the opinion which he had now eſpouſed, or to depart from it in any degree; but, on the contrary, he was daily confirmed more and more both in the truth and in the neceſſity of theſe doctrines, while he found them, in ſickneſs and in health, a ſovereign cordial to his heart, and the alone, but all-ſufficient, ſupport of his ſoul. This teſtimony he fully bore to them in his laſt illneſs, frequently repeating to his friends around him, *I find my foundation able to bear me.*

His departure was full of that ſerenity and peace which ariſe from a true acquaintance with Chriſt and his Salvation. His body, worn out with the repeated attacks of his diſorder, and with increaſing years and infirmity, gradually ſunk into the arms of death, while his ſoul winged its happy flight into the boſom of that Bleſſed Redeemer, who had long been his Portion and his All.

On the 31ſt day of March, 1784, and in the 84th year of his age, he departed without a groan, and ſweetly fell aſleep in Jeſus.

Thus lived and died this eminent ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, full of days and full of grace; gather-

ed

ed as a ſhock of corn in its ſeaſon into the garner of his heavenly Maſter. May we have grace to follow his good example, and may the Holy Spirit lead us on by the ſame way, to the ſame reſt which remaineth for the people of God.

His character, as a ſcholar, was very reſpectable. He had learning without oſtentation, and, to a good acquaintance with the Greek and Latin claſſics, joined a conſiderable knowledge of Hebrew and the writings of the Fathers. But, tho' a man of taſte, and well able to diſtinguiſh himſelf in the circle of letters, he made it a point of conſcience to lay aſide the ſcholar when he addreſſed his people, and ſtudied to accommodate himſelf to the capacity of the meaneſt of his hearers, that none might be unedified.

His views of the Miniſtry were ſerious and honourable. We have already ſeen how far he was from looking upon it as a profeſſion of advantage, in the anſwers which he gave to his Uncle and to the Biſhop of Lincoln. He could not bear to ſee or to hear of the proſtitution of the ſacred character to ſuch low and unworthy ends. A Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt appeared to him a perſon devoted to the ſervice of God and the ſouls of men, and, therefore, not at liberty to live after his own will, and ſpend his income as he would that of an eſtate; but, as this is appropriated to him out of the ſubſtance of the people for the labour of their ſouls, he is in all duty and conſcience bound to reſide amongſt them, to lay himſelf out for their good,

good, and attend to their benefit and inſtruction. "Meditate upon theſe things,—give thyſelf wholly to them" was his ſtanding motto for a miniſter of the goſpel of Chriſt.

His diſcourſes, which have been already publiſhed *, ſufficiently ſhew his ability as a Divine, and the faithful manner in which he diſcharged his great office amongſt his people: They are full of weighty matter, and are moſt honeſt and direct addreſſes to the heart and conſcience. The heart, indeed, was ever his peculiar ſtudy. Being deeply acquainted with its exceeding deceitfulneſs and evil, his attention was always particularly directed here. Hence it was the great object of his miniſtry to undeceive his fellow-creatures reſpecting their own imagined righteouſneſs, to detect them to themſelves, to ſtrip them of their vain pretences, and to bring them in guilty before God and their conſciences. For he well knew, that till this is done, Chriſt and his ſalvation are of little or no value. "They that are whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick."

After the example of his divine Maſter, it was his conſtant endeavour to eſtabliſh true humility as the ground-work of Chriſt's Religion. Not that affected reſemblance of it, which is often put on to pleaſe the world, and leaves the heart, all the time, unhumbled, and only more pleaſed with

* Mr. Adam publiſhed a volume of Sermons in 1781, beſides ſome ſingle diſcourſes preached on different occaſions.

with itſelf, becauſe of this its ſuppoſed excellence, but that true lowlineſs of ſoul, which is founded in a deep ſenſe of its own ſinfulneſs, and exceeding unworthineſs before God. This was the humility which he laboured after for himſelf and others; a humility proceeding from a divine principle, and influencing the whole man. He pitied the high and inconſiderate profeſſion of many who love to put themſelves forward, and to be looked upon as *ſomebody* in the religious world, and eſteemed the complaints and ſelf-accuſations of a broken and contrite heart, a far better evidence of a Chriſtian ſtate than the loudeſt pretenſions of the bold and ſelf-confident.

The practical parts of Chriſtianity had ever his moſt ſacred attention and regard, and were ſtrongly enforced as the neceſſary and inſeparable conſequence of true ſaving faith: For, though no man ever gloried more in the Croſs of Chriſt, or was more full and clear in maintaining the doctrine of *Chriſt's Blood and Righteouſneſs* as the only juſtification and hope of the ſoul, yet did he ever in the ſtrongeſt terms inculcate that they who have believed in God ſhould be careful to maintain good works *. A ſtrict and conſcientious adherence to integrity and uprightneſs in all our dealings, and to truth and ſincerity in our words, was a matter of high conſequence in his eſtimation. Hence he entertained a very unfavourable opinion of the religion of thoſe who could ſuffer themſelves to deal in ſmuggled or prohibited goods; to neglect

* See Letter, No. II. Appendix.

glect the duties of their ſtation and calling; to gratify their pride, at the expence of common honeſty, by living above their income; or to indulge in needleſs expences to the injury of their families, and of their ability to do good in acts of charity and benevolence.

The religious government of the tongue was likewiſe a ſubject on which he inſiſted very ſtrongly, I mean as to its regulation reſpecting the private concerns or character of our neighbour. Nothing ſeemed to hurt him more than to hear any one take pleaſure in ſpeaking ill of others, or retail ſlanderous reports to their diſadvantage; and he would frequently ſtop them abruptly, by obſerving to them, that "the roots of the tongue "lie very deep;" or, with that remark, "I ſel-"dom ſee a fault in another but I look for two in "myſelf, and they generally are not far to ſeek.

In the diſtribution of his time, and the regulation of his family, he obſerved the moſt exact order and regularity; not merely on a principle of prudence and the better conducting of his buſineſs, but thro' a religious ſenſe of the importance of his time and ſubſtance as talents received from God, and of which he was ſenſible he muſt give an account.

His dreſs, furniture, and mode of living exhibited a model of the moſt primitive ſimplicity, ſo that in viſiting him, you might imagine yourſelf a gueſt

gueſt with one of the antient Fathers rather than with a Divine of the eighteenth century: Nor let any ſuppoſe that this proceeded from covetouſneſs, or a baſe love of money; it aroſe from a conviction of the exceeding evil of the waſte of his talent, a diſapprobation of the ſumptuous manner of living too faſhionable amongſt the Clergy, and a conſcientious care that he might have it in his power to relieve the wants of others.

In the private duties of the cloſet he was diligent and unremitted. Theſe he conſidered, not only as a diſcharge of duty, but as indiſpenſably neceſſary for the life and ſupport of his ſoul, and as a principal means of maintaining intercourſe with God, and gaining thoſe daily ſupplies of divine grace, which he ſtood in continual need of as a Miniſter and as a Chriſtian.

His caution and great candor reſpecting others were alſo very remarkable, and highly worthy of imitation; and though he was firmly eſtabliſhed in the Goſpel-faith of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt alone; yet was he ever ready to make great allowances for men's different views of things, and diſtinguiſhed with much care between an error of the head and one of the heart.

His Curate one day aſking him what he thought of one of his people, whether the perſon was a real Chriſtian or not; he ſeemed to take no notice.—Some days afterwards he called him aſide, and ſaid to him,—"Sir, you aſked me the other day what

"I thought of the ſtate of A. B. and would pro-
"bably be ſurprized that I gave you no reply;
"but it was not thro' inattention.—It is a point
"which requires much ſerious conſideration be-
"fore we determine on the ſtate of any perſon;"
and then proceeded to give his ſentiments with his uſual candor.

This is but one inſtance, out of many, which might be produced in proof of that Chriſtian deliberation which he uſed in his determinations in general, and of his particular and cloſe attention to the cardinal Grace of 1 Cor. xiii. with which few were better acquainted than Mr. Adam.

The ſame grace of true Chriſtian Charity was eminently diſplayed by him in times of provocation. He was naturally of a very high and warm ſpirit, and evidently of very quick feelings in caſes of this nature. But this ſerved only the more fully to diſplay the power of that divine grace which gave him ſuch happy victory over his paſſions, that his meekneſs and humility were the admiration of all that knew him. A Clergyman who lived in his family above ſix years, and had the opportunity of ſeeing him at all times, and in variety of circumſtances, writes of him thus: "I
"don't recollect ever to have ſeen his temper ruffled
"above once or twice in all the time that I lived
"with him. When any thing happened of a try-
"ing or provoking kind, he uſed to turn upon
"his heel, and ſay nothing, 'till he had thought it
"over, and examined whether there was indeed a
"juſt cauſe for anger or not." But

But this conqueſt of himſelf was not attained to but by hard conflicts, and in the exerciſe of much labour, watchfulneſs, and prayer. He was forced to diſpute his ground inch by inch, and would often ſay, "if ever grace was grafted on a crab-ſtock, it is ſurely in me."

In this connexion it would be injuſtice to omit his forgiveneſs of injuries. That which was formerly ſaid of Archbiſhop Cranmer, "do my "Lord of Canterbury a ſhrewd turn and you "make him your friend as long as you live," might with the greateſt truth be applied to our worthy author. And often would he requite the ingratitude and rudeneſs of an ignorant and perverſe pariſhioner, by taking occaſion to do him ſome kind office as ſoon as poſſible.

But among all the graces which adorned his Chriſtian profeſſion, his patience and reſignation under the afflicting hand of God, were moſt remarkable. In theſe he was peculiarly eminent, and exceeded by few that we have either ſeen or read of. It pleaſed God to afflict him, for many years before his death, with a diſorder of a very peculiar and trying nature, which, through a ſimilarity in ſome of its ſymptoms, was, for a time, apprehended to be the *ſtone*, and the reader will find frequent reference to it, under this deſcription, in the private thoughts: But, through the whole, the power of divine grace ſhone with a moſt ſtriking ſplendor, while nothing but meekneſs and ſubmiſſion were to be ſeen in his deportment, and adoration and thankfulneſs heard from his lips.

A prayer which he compoſed and made uſe of on theſe occaſions will give the reader the fulleſt ſatisfaction of the truth of this remark.*

His manner was rather peculiar, but it was eaſy to perceive it to be the reſult of much conſcientious thought. He ſpake little; but what he ſaid was full of that weight and gravity which beſpoke the Philoſopher and the Chriſtian. Yet this his taciturnity, proceeding alſo from great natural reſerve, muſt be conſidered as one of his chief defects, and had its unhappy influence in preventing his greater uſefulneſs, both amongſt his people, and his friends in general; and he himſelf both ſaw, and often lamented it in this view.

Upon the whole—as a miniſter—he was conſcientious, diligent, and regular—faithfully attentive to his miniſtry, filling up his office with great integrity, and adorning it by a ſuitable life and converſation.

As a Chriſtian—he was humble, ſerious, and devout—a ſincere follower of his great Maſter—ſound in the faith and hope of the goſpel, and truly exemplary in every good word and work: An affectionate huſband, ſteady friend—kind neighbour and indulgent maſter: And, to ſum up all in the words of the worthy clergyman, in his letter before referred to, "If his real character "could be held forth, it would well deſerve an at-"tentive review and imitation. And tho' it may "be

* See Appendix, No. V.

" be expected that ſome may think light of it,
" and others ſneer at it, as too preciſe and primi-
" tive, I doubt not he will one day appear great,
" and be numbered among the worthies, who will
" ſhine forth as the ſun in the kingdom of their
" Father."

J. S.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

The following LETTERS of Mr. ADAM, *written at different times, and two other papers referred to in the foregoing relation, will help to illuſtrate this ſhort ſketch of his character.*

NUMBER I.

To a LADY *in Cornwall.*

MADAM, Nov. 19th, 1756.

PERMIT me to congratulate you on your happy deliverance from the Religion in faſhion; by which I mean a creditable profeſſion, without that knowledge of the heart which brings us hungering and thirſting to Chriſt for the relief we want, and which he came from the boſom of the Father to offer us.

That ſuch a profeſſion may conſiſt with a ſecret deep-rooted love of the world, and indulgence to almoſt every vanity of it, we have thouſands of witneſſes who, never ſuſpecting the goodneſs of their ſtate, cannot bear to have it called in queſtion, and almoſt neceſſarily diſlike reproach, and hate thoſe who condemn them, by turning from their ways and maxims. This is one of the greateſt difficulties in the way of a thorough converſion, and needs all the authority of that dreadful denunciation, "whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, "&c." to ſupport us under it. I pray God ſend it with all its weight to your heart and mine, and

and enable us to make a ſteady confeſſion of the goſpel in its truth and purity, as oppoſite to our natural views, tempers, and affections, and calling us to an experimental knowledge of God, and a new ſtate of holy communion with him.

How delightful a thing it is to count, and not to count but feel, the Chriſtian's gains—faith and fidelity; peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt; a renewed will; increaſing love; and hope full of immortality! And how ſhort is the time of our ſuffering! if upon the whole we do ſuffer and are not richly compenſated, even here, in every condition by the afore-mentioned advantages. Go on, Madam, knowing whom you have choſen, and let neither your own weakneſs, nor the frowns of the world terrify you. Chriſt will have his grace exalted, in oppoſition to all diſcouraging unbelieving thoughts from the former, and a faithful acceptance of it, and eſtabliſhment in it, will make you victorious over the latter.

Never to aſk ourſelves what our great want is, or what we ſhould aſk of God if we might have the wiſh of our hearts, is great blindneſs and ſtupidity; and yet it is the caſe, not only of the groſsly irreligious, but of all thoſe who are in the practice of an external form *only*.

The awakening of the ſoul from this ſleep of nature is neceſſarily the firſt ſtep toward a recovery.

To know that we want remiſſion of ſin, and ſtrength againſt it; a will to live to the glory of God, and mercy to ſave in our very beſt eſtate; and that the goſpel comes home to our caſe in every one of theſe points, anſwers all our wiſhes, and reveals our wants only to relieve them, is illumination in the underſtanding.

But the great work is ſtill to come, which is the ſpiritual life of faith, or the cloſing of the *heart*, reſolutely and fully, with this bleſſed ſcheme of redemption.

May God Almighty ſupport and bleſs you in the benefit of this redemption, comfort you in the blood of Chriſt, and carry you on ſwiftly in the way of holineſs, conformity to the croſs, and ſelf-renunciation. As Chriſt has wrought ſalvation by himſelf, and gotten the victory for us with his own right hand, he muſt have the whole glory of our recovery. But tho' he wants nothing of ours to make his payment full weight, and ſcorns whatever we can offer him by way of purchaſe, he expects and is well pleaſed with the free tender of our ſervice; and all he has done and ſuffered fails of its end, if it does not make us a willing people.

You, dear Lady, love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity. Love him more, that you may be ſtill more happy in him, and taſte more of his love. Make communion with him, and acceſs to God by him, the delight of your ſoul, and the great

end

end you live for. Love his commands, becauſe they are his, and then not one of them will be grievous. Love his friends, becauſe they are ſuch; and his enemies, to wiſh and make them his friends.

I write not to inſtruct you, who are much higher in the divine ſchool than myſelf; nor can I have any end in flattering you, as I am unknown. But my deſire is to animate you to ardour and perſeverance in the glorious race; and my hope is, that whatever ſtate you are in, you will ſet no value upon preſent attainments, but be always preſſing on to ſtill greater heights. A progreſſive ſtate is always a hopeful one, becauſe it is both ſincere and ſelf-condemning; and if it has one eye upon perfection, keeps the other ſteadily fixed on Chriſt. To him, your Saviour, gracious helper, and bountiful rewarder, I commend you, and myſelf to your prayers, and am, from a far country,

MADAM,

Your's in chriſtian ſincerity,

T. ADAM.

NUMBER II.

To the Reverend Mr. B.

DEAR SIR, *June* 27, 1760.

I Am letters in your debt, and ſhould certainly have wrote before now, if I had not expected you here every week. My wife too has been deſiring it with great good will, and ſome degree of impatience. Alas! ſhe is in a very weak condition, and I fear ſinking under the infirmities of a broken conſtitution. God be gracious to her.—Help us with your prayers. I hope ſhe knows her refuge, and flies to it. Nothing in life or death for ſtrong conſolation like our great High Prieſt, and his atonement for ſinners. It is very mortifying to nature to be ſaved as the thief upon the croſs was; but there is no other way, and in our beſt eſtate we are brands plucked out of the fire. Settle yourſelf and your hearers upon this ground. If our good works follow us, we are beholden to our faith for them, and to faith, firſt and laſt, for our whole ſalvation. I hear you are labouring hard in conjunction with Mr. Venn, to whom I deſire my beſt reſpects. Go on, and the bleſſing of God go along with you. Keep a watchful eye on the riſings of pride. It will beſet you on all occaſions, and ſucceſs or diſappointment, evil report and good report, will add fuel to it.

I have received a dozen franks from Lord D. for the uſe of Mr. Venn. I ſuppoſe his work goes on. Tho' it is a delicate affair, his light and ſpirit will carry him through. *The whole duty*

duty of man is in poſſeſſion of the general eſteem, and in many hands; but for that very reaſon the inſufficiency of it, as not anſwering the title, ſhould be laid open. To do juſtice to it, it is perhaps the compleateſt ſyſtem of Chriſtian Ethics we have. I never read a ſection of it without being convinced by it of ſin; and in that view, as well as a directory to thoſe who are aiming at perfection under Chriſt, it is of great uſe, and cannot be too much commended. The apology commonly made for its defect in not laying the foundation of Chriſtian Doctrine, is, that it was wrote at a time when faith was diſgraced by practice. Ever ſince things have been wheeling about to the other extreme; and there has long been a neceſſity of inſiſting on the glorious peculiarities of the Goſpel, and reminding men that there is no poſſibility of being in the way of duty without the love of God; which can never take place in the heart without a ſenſe of redeeming mercy. Moral writing and preaching *only*, is deſtructive of morality, as it concerns the inward man, and has a fatal tendency to make perſons, even of the beſt natural tempers, fly to an outward decency of behaviour, and lay the weight of their ſalvation upon it, inſtead of faith in the pardoning love of God, humbling the ſoul, and productive of real holineſs. Mr. Venn's performance, I imagine will, in the main, be a working upon this plan; and I hope he will convince us of the neceſſity and great efficacy of Goſpel principles, in order to our acceptable obedience; and, that what is too generally thought the whole duty of man, is neither the

whole

whole nor the better half of it, but ſelf-deceit, and a poor ſubſtitute for them.

I cannot find Rivington's letter to Mr. Venn, but ſuppoſe it is of no great conſequence. I hoped I ſhould have delivered Mr. Walker's Helps, &c. into your own hands, but, if you do not come ſhortly, will ſend it, if you deſire it. The Archdeacon, who will be glad to ſee you, told me lately he had wrote for a number of the "ordination queſtion," but could not get them. Pray tell me whether and how they are to be had. What is become of the man of Truro? I have not heard from him of many months, tho' my laſt letter to him was of an intereſting nature.

I am obliged to you and Mr. Venn for his ſabbath ſermon, and heartily wiſh it may have an effect far and near; but there were ſome leaves wanting. It is very much to be lamented that men of learning and piety ſhould ever have ſtruck in with the corruption of mankind, as they once did in this nation, to weaken the obligation of a command, which is not only of a moral nature, as a guard and ſecurity to all the reſt, but more eſpecially ſacred for its ſpiritual import, as the ſoul's call from earth to heaven. Certainly more was intended by it than only to take the yoke of ſervile labour from off our necks; and the man has no more benefit from it than his beaſt, who ſees nothing elſe in it but a liberty to ſkip in his paſture. I truſt you are always in the right ſchool, and know that your fall and fever were the leſſons

of

of the day, perhaps, you find too by experience that knowledge and ſtrength are gained in the ſchool of affliction. I do; for domeſtic trouble preſſes hard upon me. What is the uſe of this but to humble us in the duſt, to ground us in the ſenſe of our weakneſs, and thereby hinder us from thinking a lie of ourſelves; to make us call louder, and keep us cloſe to our remedy? Dear Sir, God bleſs you. Come when you can; it is but a day's journey, and you will be heartily welcome to

Your affectionate brother,

THO. ADAM.

NUMBER III.

To the ſame.

DEAR SIR, *Nov.* 4, 1760.

PERHAPS you will wonder when I tell you I am not ſurprized to hear what has happened at H. Wherever the Goſpel is preached there will be miſtakes even among the ſincere; and oppoſers will catch at any ſhadow, and invent falſehoods, to keep off conviction, and harden themſelves in the worſt of errors. "I an advocate for the merit of good works!"—I abhor the very ſound of the words from my heart, and cannot imagine what there was in my ſermons to ground ſuch a miſapprehenſion upon. I thank God I have long been eſtabliſhed in the belief of the 11th article of our Church, not being able to find comfort or ſure footing any where elſe; and would aſk thoſe miſerable

miſerable miſtakers of the Goſpel, who are for laying any other foundation, whether they dare ſay in cool blood that what they think the beſt action of their lives, or the choiceſt grace of their ſouls, will bear to be tried in God's balance; and if not, what will they do with all the reſt? There is no trifling here; the ſoul is loſt by ſin, and how it can be recovered by actions which have a mixture of ſin in them, as the beſt have, is not to be conceived. The conſequence is plain: Salvation is a gift from firſt to laſt, altogether free and undeſerved; and the man was never humbled, never conſidered what a fiery trial he has to go through, who can think of challenging it as a debt, in whole or in part. I am not vindicating myſelf to you and Mr. V. on this point, which I ſuppoſe to be quite needleſs; but give you leave to mention what I have ſaid, wherever you think it may be neceſſary, and have pricked my finger, as the poor boy Leaf did, to ſign it.

See Fox, vol. III. p. 306.

It is true, in all my diſcourſes I endeavour as much as poſſible to take in the whole ſcheme—Repentance, Faith, Holineſs; and if inſiſting on the laſt, in its due connection, and for right ends, is preaching up works, I cannot help it. Wo be to thoſe who ſeparate what God has joined; for though faith *alone* ſaves us, and not according to the common gloſs, if it works by love; yet I contend that faith is not faith, if it does not work by love, keep the commandments, and make us new creatures. My dear Mr. V. will be upon his guard,

guard, and watch zealouſly over ſuch of his converts as would make Goſpel-grace a pretence for ſloth, or low attainments, and, by not building themſelves up in their moſt holy faith, give occaſion to the adverſaries of the truth to ſpeak reproachfully of it; and I ſay farther to him, fear not: Proceed quietly and ſteadily in dependence on the arm of the Lord. Let him tell his flock not to give heed to any other Goſpel by whomſoever preached: If he expects to have things go on ſmoothly, he is ſadly out in his reckoning: It is a poor artifice of the father of lies to ſet me in oppoſition to him; but this calumny, if deſpiſed, will die away of itſelf.

Thoſe who are influenced by his preaching, and truly awakened, will ſoon diſcover what a wretched condition they are in, with reſpect to works; the reſt muſt fret and ſpeak all manner of evil, and prop themſelves as well as they can with their own doings. It is ſomething remarkable, that commonly thoſe who have the feweſt good works, and are evidently not in a ſtate of careful walking and working, ſhould build moſt upon them. Aſk them what they mean by it, and you will find it is little more than that they do not pick pockets, and knock down every one they meet.

I deſire my love to Mr. and Mrs. V. to whom I write this as well as to you, and am your and their affectionate

THO. ADAM.

NUMBER IV.

On the Death of my Wife, July 29, 1760.

IF I have true *charity*, I need never want a wife. My Pariſh, my Family, my Relations, my Friends, every ſoul will be the object of my conjugal tenderneſs, and the exerciſe of it, from a root of love and obedience to my Saviour, a never-failing ſource of the pureſt delight.

I find I have ſettled that love upon *One* which is due to *All*. This is a painful ſtroke;—but I am ſenſible it is in order to another, and a more painful one; and may my God enable me to ſubmit to it, and make it effectual to his own bleſſed end. Now is the time for a total ſeparation from the world and the fleſh, by the ſharp knife of circumciſion. Now God calls me to a full choice of him. Now Chriſt ſays to me, *Wilt thou be made whole?* Now the Spirit ſtands ready with his purifying fire to do his office in me. Holy and Eternal Trinity. *Amen.*

O my ſoul, thy lawful comforts have been a ſnare to thee, and thou haſt well nigh ruined thyſelf by creature-dependence.—Know thy ſupport. Know it is *thy God*.—Know how wretchedly thou haſt been deceived, and turn to him that ſmiteth thee.

O

O Lord, thou haſt ſtruck me to the ground, and what wouldeſt thou have me to do? I know: Speak it evidently to *my heart*. If my own rebellious will does not oppoſe thy gracious deſign I know I ſhall not want illumination and help.

I ſee plainly I am come to the turning point. From this day forward, a life of faith or ſenſuality;—of heavenly affections or prevailing love of earthly things;—of ſlavery or freedom;—of ſelf-pleaſing or entire devotedneſs to God.

One chain may bind us as faſt to the world as a thouſand. I have ſeemed to myſelf to be above it in many reſpects, but am ſadly convinced it has all along had poſſeſſion of me, and that my love of it, though leſs diſcernible, was perhaps more ſtrong through centring in one object. Oh, that I might be buried in the ſame grave with her; and that, henceforth, I had nothing to do in the world but to live to him that died for me, and love God with a pure heart fervently!

It is neceſſary for me to obliterate as much as poſſible all ſuch thoughts and remembrances of the deceaſed as may augment my ſorrows, make reſignation to God more difficult, and obſtruct his ſalutary operations.

Affliction, in union with grace, works powerfully to the healing of the ſoul; and if the former does not ſend us to the latter, we ſhall not experience the healing benefit of the great Phyſician. I can

now think, if the dear deceaſed was alive again, what would I not do, forbear, or ſuffer for her ſake: But if I am not willing to do as much for Chriſt, what can be the reaſon of it but want of love.

O, my heart!—Nature has had its turn in great weakneſs. When I went into the room where ſhe was laid out, the ſight of a breathleſs, extended, icy corpſe, ſo loved,—too much loved,—drew a flood of tears from me, with many ſobs. I had not fortified myſelf before-hand by prayer and the exerciſe of reſignation.

Bleſſed be God, I was more ſtrengthened at her funeral, and hope I ſhall always remember it as an earneſt of what he will do for me, upon all occaſions, if I fly to his power.

If I look out for eaſe from the preſent diſtreſs any way but by reſignation to the will of God, and deſire of complete union with it for the remainder of my life, I take myſelf out of his hands, ſuffer without improvement, am ſtill at the mercy of events, and ſhall be unprepared for my own death.

I have loſt the dear partner of my heart to whom I uſed to unboſom myſelf without reſerve, and communicate all my thoughts and cares, deſigns and wiſhes, joys and griefs, and in the want of her ſeem to myſelf as if I were left alone in the midſt of a deſart.—Recal thyſelf, O my ſoul, wake

wake from this ſtupor of a vain ſorrow, and do not indulge a thought to harden thyſelf in it. *Where is thy God?* If thou haſt *him* to go to, what canſt thou complain of? Make *him* thy friend and counſellor. He is now inviting and even *forcing* thee into his preſence and familiarity. Speak as freely to *him* as thou didſt to *her*, and look ſo well to thyſelf that thou needeſt not to be afraid to tell him all thy ſecrets.

NUMBER V.

A PRAYER *uſed by Mr.* ADAM *in a Fit of the Stone.*

O LORD, my Maker and Redeemer, I thank thee for all thy goodneſs to me, thy unworthy creature, and eſpecially for the great mercy of *the Stone*. I know thou ſendeſt it for good, that I may make deep ſearch into myſelf, and improve the pain of my body to the health and everlaſting ſalvation of my ſoul. I confeſs my ſins are more in number than the hairs of my head, and deſerve a more ſevere chaſtiſement; but thou diſpenſeſt thy corrections with unerring wiſdom, and I deſire to ſubmit myſelf in all things to thy gracious diſpoſal, and to chuſe what thou chuſeſt for me. O let me ſay, by a mighty power from thy grace, *It is good for me that I am afflicted*, that my life may be a continual preparation for death, and death welcome, through a living faith in Chriſt Jeſus, who hath taken out the ſting of it, redeemed us unto thee by the blood of his croſs,

croſs, and inſured our juſtification by his reſurrection from the dead.

Bleſs, I beſeech thee, the means uſed for my eaſe and recovery; for my help and truſt is only in thee; and if thou doſt not think it fit to grant my requeſt, enable me to bear what thou layeſt upon me, without a murmuring thought, and with perfect reſignation to thy bleſſed will.

O Lord God of my life and of all my mercies, deal with me as thou pleaſeſt. Do thy own work in thy own way. Into thy hands I commend my ſpirit. Grant me thy peace. Carry me ſafely through all my trials; and make it the deſire of my heart to know, love, and bleſs thee, and be prepared for the everlaſting enjoyment of thee through Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

THAT the reader may reap the full benefit of theſe thoughts, it ſeemed proper to obviate a plauſible objection, which not only the careleſs and profane, but even many well-diſpoſed perſons may often feel themſelves inclined to make. The objection may be conceived to run in this form: "If Mr. Adam was ſo good a man, how happens it that he ſhould every where be full of ſuch complaints againſt his own ſins and corruptions? It may be fairly allowed that he ſhould be ſo in the commencement of his religious courſe; but is it not unaccountable that he ſhould continue ſo thro' life? Is this the benefit of religion, to keep a perſon in a perpetual ſtate of miſery and diſtreſs? The language he uſes would ſuit the greateſt ſlave to his luſts and vices; but not ſurely a man of exemplary piety and virtue like Mr. Adam. One would expect that ſuch a man ſhould have enjoyed a continual feaſt within from the conſciouſneſs of his uprightneſs and ſincerity."

The objection does not meet the caſe of our Author only, but that of the moſt eminent ſaints, both in antient and modern times; it deſerves indeed a more minute diſcuſſion than the limits of a preface will allow: Some few hints, however, may be given ſufficient to clear up the whole affair with minds of any intelligence in divine things; at any rate they will not be in vain, if the reader finds

finds himſelf led by them to a more uſeful and more ſatisfactory peruſal of the Author.

I. *In the firſt place*, however ſtrange to many it may ſeem that ſo confeſſedly good a man ſhould complain ſo deeply of his ſinfulneſs all his days, it muſt be inſiſted on that there is nothing in it unſcriptural. The doctrines and views of divine revelation all confirm the propriety of it. From them it is evident that true holineſs, and a true growth in holineſs, are ever attended with ſuch a ſenſe of indwelling-ſin. Let any man carefully attend to St. Paul ſpeaking of himſelf, Rom. vii. That he is not perſonating a wicked man, is certain from the whole tenor of the deſcription. "What I hate," ſays he, "that do I," and "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." To hate ſin, and to delight in the law of God, belong only to a perſon of real piety; nor is there any thing in the whole account which would lead us to ſuſpect that he means to ſpeak of himſelf as being only in the firſt ſtage and entrance of practical chriſtianity. From the 7th to the 14th verſe, he ſpeaks indeed of the time paſt, and is deſcribing the former exerciſe of his mind with reſpect to the law of God, and which he experienced in his conviction and converſion: But from the 14th verſe to the end of the chapter, he plainly ſpeaks of the time preſent, and the very feelings of his ſoul while he was writing to the Romans. No other ſenſe can certainly be put on them, without offering an intolerable violence to all the rules of grammatical conſtruction.* Toward

St. Paul never was in the ſtate he deſcribes, Rom. 7. How could he? vide Acts, 9. &c. He deſcribes to the life an awakened Jew, who believed the Goſpel, but had not yet the ſenſe of pardon by the witneſs of the Spirit, and conſequently was unhappy. S. B.

Thou lieſt!

ward the end of the chapter he looks forward, indeed, to the time to come, when, groaning in the bitterneſs of his ſpirit under preſent preſſures and afflictions, he cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?" and relieves himſelf with this anſwer, "I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." He certainly expected deliverance, but it was in the world to come. And in the next chapter he explains more diſtinctly how the ſaints "ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God;" but here "they wait for it with patience, and the ſpirit helpeth their infirmities." This is the natural and obvious ſenſe of the Apoſtle,[×] and if it need any confirmation, it may receive it from various other paſſages in his epiſtles. But as brevity muſt be ſtudied, I would only deſire the reader to compare the chapter which has been conſidered with Galatians v. The ſame inward conflict, which is more largely deſcribed in the former chapter, is thus briefly illuſtrated in the latter: "For the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other, ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would;" though, on the whole, they are "led by the Spirit" in their walk: Nor is there the leaſt intimation given that things will ever be otherwiſe with them while they are "waiting for the hope of righteouſneſs by faith." It is not true only of St. Paul then, but of all real Chriſtians in the world, whether weak or ſtrong, whether babes, young men, or fathers in Chriſt,

× It is the falſe ſenſe of an idle Calviniſt, an advocate for Satan.

that the conflict deſcribed in Romans vii. belongs to them all. However difficult it may be then for many to account for the repeated complaints and ſenſe of ſin in which the Author of the following thoughts abound, it is certain at leaſt that St. Paul, and with him all true Chriſtians, have ever had the ſame; nor is there an expreſſion more deeply deſcriptive of ſin and miſery, in the following pages, than thoſe made uſe of by the inſpired Apoſtle: *I am carnal, ſold under ſin. What I do, I allow not. What I would, that I do not, ſin dwelleth in me. I know that in me, that is, in my fleſh,* or ſinful nature, what is properly my own, *dwelleth no good thing. When I would do good, evil is preſent with me. I ſee another law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity.*

O wretched man that I am! Theſe are not words of courſe. There are no words of courſe in the ſacred oracles. Here is a very animated ſenſibility of wo and diſtreſs becauſe of ſin. It is true, he has his reliefs and ſupports, his joys and conſolations, and the next chapter powerfully deſcribes them. The candid reader will ſee too that our Author had the ſame; and when he farther takes notice of the language of David every where in the Pſalms, of Aſaph in the lxxiii. of Heman in the lxxxviii. of Agur in Proverbs xxx. of Ezra in his ixth chapter; indeed of real good men in general, whether in Scripture or elſewhere, when ſpeaking of themſelves, the edge of his ſurprize may be blunted, and he may at length begin to think that

that our Author ſpeaks only as the Scriptures fully vindicate, and as the beſt of men have reaſon to do.

Yet ſtill he may think the objection by no means anſwered, at leaſt the difficulty by no means accounted for. Let him not be offended, if he be told that he himſelf needs a better acquaintance with his own heart, and with the methods of divine grace. How theſe things can be, ſhall be explained as conciſely as poſſible; but thoſe only to whom "a broken and contrite heart" hath given ſome light into this ſubject, will be expected duly to reliſh it.

II. In an unconverted perſon there is but one nature, in a real Chriſtian there are two;† the one is called the fleſh, the other the ſpirit. Theſe terms do not relate to the conflict between reaſon and paſſion, of which the pagan philoſophers wrote; but to the conflict between all that is of man by nature, whether reaſon, paſſion, or whatever elſe, and all that is of the grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt, communicated through the Holy Ghoſt. Each nature has its diſtinct exerciſes in the ſame man; the reſult muſt be two ſets, as it were, of affections, views, and propenſities. This conſideration alone accounts for the ſeeming paradox, that St. Paul ſhould ſpeak ſuch apparent contradictions. If the reader be apt to wonder that Mr. Adam ſhould ſometimes ſpeak ſo triumphantly of the happineſs and holineſs of a Chriſtian, at other times ſo feelingly of his corruption and

† There need not be two; there ought to be but one. Chriſt cannot dwell with Satan; but he can and does dwell in the hearts of all true believers, who are faithful to his Grace. The pleading for ſin in believers is Devilish doctrine.

miſery, he muſt be underſtood to ſpeak with reference to theſe two ſtates, and it will be a ſufficient apology to ſay, in his behalf, that the ſame ſeeming inconſiſtency is in St. Paul himſelf. He who, in Romans vii. is "carnal, ſold under ſin," is in the 8th made "free from the law of ſin and death." Each aſſertion has its truth, as reference is made to each of the ſtates in which he is converſant. In one ſenſe he is wicked, miſerable, unclean, a ſlave of all that is evil; in another he is holy, happy, pure in heart, the Lord's freeman, and an heir of heaven. It is not to be wondered at that the conflict of ſuch oppoſite views and principles ſhould produce various exerciſes in the human heart; and that a mind vigorous and intelligent, like our author's, would be led to take large notice of them in viewing his own. This it is which conſtitutes the Chriſtian's internal warfare, which will continue, till death tranſmit the patient warrior to that reſt which remains for the people of God.

Perhaps the difficulty, which many find in admitting that St. Paul was ſpeaking of himſelf in Rom. vii. will be farther obviated by conſidering that it is not a practical courſe of wickedneſs which he means, when he talks of being "carnal, ſold "under ſin," concupiſcence is the term he uſes, and that is what he means by indwelling ſin. It is the tendency of the carnal mind, which is enmity againſt God, that he complains of, as perpetually exerting itſelf in inward oppoſition to the will of God, and continually marking with imperfection

ſection the beſt of his purpoſes and actions. Did not the Chriſtian himſelf inform us of it, it would often be ſcarce diſcernible, ſeldom or ever in a great degree, by others, that he had this ſinful propenſity. His walk is not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit, as St. Paul declares. And the general prevalency of holineſs in the conduct, is the ſtanding evidence of his ſincere converſion. For *ſin ſhall* in no ſenſe *have dominion over* any true children of God. And it is their privilege to grow in all practical godlineſs more and more, notwithſtanding the ſtrength and violence of their inbred foes. Perſons, unacquainted with theſe things, might think St. Paul ſpeaks a language proper only for a murderer, an adulterer, or a robber. But the truth is, the evils which he feels are mere trifles, or even no evils at all in the eyes of the greater part of mankind. And were this matter properly underſtood, the candid reader might ſee, that it is the ſuperior holineſs of the man which drew from him that deep ſigh, "O wretched man that I am," and not an Antinomian ſpirit, as this interpretation of the Apoſtle has been too uncandidly repreſented; that in proportion to men's growth in a gracious ſenſibility, theſe complaints (if cordial, and not affected complaints) will be more pungent and intenſe, becauſe ſin grows more and more offenſive to the taſte, and the man will naturally be led to be more and more diſpleaſed with himſelf, the more reaſon the reſt of mankind have to be pleaſed with all his conduct. This ſeems a true account of St. Paul's caſe, and the diſcern-

ing

ing reader will ſee, that Mr. Adam's reſembles his, and of courſe will need no better vindication.

III. It is this deep and abiding ſenſe of internal ſin, which lays the foundation for that all-important grace of a Chriſtian's humility. To live under a daily conſciouſneſs, that in him dwelleth no "good thing," if this will not humble us, it will be hard to ſay what will.[×] Hence, alſo, the grace of God and his Chriſt, ſo ſuitably adapted to his wants and his miſeries, and the ſcriptural views of the goſpel, become ſo unſpeakably precious to his heart. Hither he is obliged continually to repair for relief and ſupport, and he is not diſappointed. The poverty of ſpirit, which this view of things excites in his ſoul, gives the true reliſh to his Chriſtian food, and the conſolations of divine forgiveneſs and mercy become the ſweeteſt cordial to his heart. Thus he may in one view be always ſorrowful, in another always rejoicing. It will not now be difficult to conceive, that ſtill wiſdom's ways are pleaſant ways, and all her paths are peace; though, to a mind jaundiced by pride, all things will bear a melancholy hue. And if it be a joyful and pleaſant thing to be thankful, the gratitude hence excited towards his God and Redeemer, will repay itſelf in a feaſt of the ſincereſt pleaſure. Forgiveneſs of injuries will, comparatively ſpeaking, grow an eaſy and pleaſant duty to him who daily feels his infinite obligations to a God of forgiveneſs; liberality, long-ſuffering, and genuine univerſal benevolence, do obviouſly grow out of the ſame ſoil. And becauſe the indwelling

+ Hard it may be to you, but not to any who's heart is filled with the love of God. This will truly humble the ſoul.

dwelling concupiſcence ſtill ſtains every work, and is the chief burden of the Chriſtian's life, hence heaven is deſired with ardour inexpreſſible; covetouſneſs and the love of the world are dethroned in his heart; and that ſpirit of living for the world to come, and not for this, in which Mr. Adam moſt eminently excelled, and in which the generality of even true Chriſtians are pitiably defective, will thrive in the ſoul, in proportion as it grows in a ſenſe of indwelling ſin. It were much to be wiſhed that this ſubject were better underſtood than it is. Well-diſpoſed perſons would find that the ſecret of growing in all true holineſs much depends on it. Spiritual comforts would be ſought earneſtly, but in a right temper, and with due reſignation; they would be grounded more ſolidly on the hope of heaven in Chriſt; and heavenly things themſelves would ſtill be more looked for than preſent conſolation.

The primitive Chriſtians were wont to place daily before their eyes the ſecond coming of Chriſt, the reſurrection of the juſt, and the ſcriptural views of heavenly bleſſedneſs, as St. Paul's epiſtles abundantly evince. If we expect divine conſolations in our warfare, abſtracted from theſe things, we ſhall be tempted to embrace airy phantoms inſtead of ſolid nouriſhment, as too many have done. For if, on the other ſide, we look at the conſequences of other ſort of views, it is but too plain that thoſe who are carried out in their expectations beyond the line of ſobriety, which has been fixed by the Apoſtle, do not grow in holi-

neſs,

neſs, but in pride. The preſumptuous are encouraged, and the ſincere are ſaddened, and real heavenly mindedneſs is by no means promoted.

Thus does it appear—1ſt, That the objection which gave occaſion to this preface is anſwered on the grounds of ſcripture—2dly, is invalidated by a fair and candid conſideration of the caſe itſelf—and 3dly, will appear deſtitute even of a ſhadow of probability, when it is ſeen that true holineſs of life much depends on the heart-felt conſciouſneſs of that indwelling ſin which gives riſe to the objection itſelf.

Are you, reader, bowed down with a ſenſe of much ſin and corruption? Have you long laboured againſt it, and are you tempted to think you have done ſo to little purpoſe? Did you expect that by this time you ſhould have been much farther advanced in the divine life, and have had far leſs to do with ſin? And that none had ever ſo wicked an heart as yourſelf? It is a miſtake commonly made; and even thoſe who are moſt fortified againſt it in their judgment, are yet continually prone to make it. But be not diſcouraged: The holy man, whoſe thoughts you are going to peruſe, felt the ſame evils daily which you do, and we have ſeen reaſon for concluding, that a ſtill greater degree of the ſame ſenſibility may yet be your lot. You would grow in grace; but you muſt leave to God himſelf the way and manner of it. Indeed a very eſſential part of true holineſs lies in this reſignation of ſpirit. Deſcend more willingly

willingly into the valley of humiliation, and you will find comfort in Chriſt, and ſtrength againſt ſin to abound more freely. Aſſure yourſelf, that a ſtate of uniform eaſe in religion is a fool's paradiſe. Much ſenſible comfort and ſerious warfare, attended often with great variety of frames, belong to thoſe who yet are thriving Chriſtians, and advancing ſafely and vigorouſly towards heaven. Many go on ſmoothly unacquainted with their own corruptions and Satan's temptations. Their tranquillity is more the reſult of ſtupefaction, than of growth in grace. Be not ſeduced by plauſible reaſonings of thoſe of lower attainments in religion, to quit your ground, and follow any other ſcent than that you are upon. You muſt truſt in the word; you muſt exerciſe patience; you muſt be content to meet with ſtrange things, ſuch as are very mortifying to fleſh and blood, and ſuch as confound the pride of your underſtanding. For in all things God's ways are not as man's ways; thoſe whom he means to fill, muſt be emptied. Look ſtedfaſtly at the grace of Chriſt by faith, and at heaven as your aim, and you will never want either conſolation or fruitfulneſs by the way.

Thoſe muſt, however, be ſolemnly warned, who would abuſe the grace of God to licentiouſneſs. For ſome may abound in complaints of themſelves all their days, and, fancying that to be a ſufficient mark of humility, content themſelves in their preſent ſtate, ſinning that grace may abound. What has been ſaid, was meant to inſtruct the ignorant, and to correct ſome miſtakes in the ſincere con-

cerning the nature of true holineſs, and the way of growing in it. It was not meant to harden you in your vain preſumption. If your complaints be ſincere, the conſtant tenor of an humble, charitable, heavenly-minded life will evidence it. But if you can go on in the love of the world, and in the practical indulgence of ſin at your eaſe, be aſſured the ſenſations of the writer you are going to read, are in their whole nature diſtinct from yours. Learn to repent and believe the goſpel.

Some readers of the following papers may belong to thoſe profeſſors of godlineſs, who rather affect a rational caſt of thinking, and though not void of the love of heavenly things, are yet too much in danger of being carried away by the ſtrong current of the age, which prides itſelf in accuracy of reaſoning. The thoughts of our venerable author will rather offend your taſte; if you can ſee enough in him to cauſe you to reſpect him as a Chriſtian, you will be tempted to think meanly, however, of his judgment in religion. But beware of forming a raſh concluſion. He was unqueſtionably a man of deep thought, ſtrong ſenſe, and in perſonal holineſs a ſhining light in his day. You have reaſon to ſuſpect, then, that his ſpiritual underſtanding muſt have been very good, even better than your own. What if that too practical conformity to the world, that ſtrong deſire of human applauſe, that too eager taſte after the beſt worldly things, as human literature and philoſophy, and that habitual deadneſs in divine things, which for years have been your burden;

den, ariſe from the lowneſs of your views in real religion. You too haſtily take it for granted, that you know all that is to be known; you affect a ſimplicity in religion, but a ſimplicity more like that of a Philoſopher than a Chriſtian. You have too great an averſion to the depth of Chriſtian myſteries. Could you be perſuaded to pray more fervently, and ſubmit in a more child-like and reverent manner to the teachings of God's Spirit, you might find ſomething in the thoughts of this man of God more ſuitably uſeful to your ſouls, and well calculated to advance you in Chriſtian life.

After all that can be ſaid, if theſe thoughts ſhould fall into the hands of perſons unacquainted with the whole of vital religion, no prefatory explanation can render them agreeable. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned." * The moſt obvious, if not the only, uſe, which ſuch can make of them, is, to take occaſion from thence to ſuſpect their own ignorance and unconverted ſtate; to ſeek diligently the means of light and recovery, and to aſk wiſdom from above, with a power of conviction, to which they have hitherto been ſtrangers, even wiſdom from that God, "who giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given them." †

Something it may be neceſſary to add reſpecting the form, in which theſe private thoughts of Mr.

* 1 Cor. ii. 14. † James i. 5.

Adam are preſented to the public. They are extracted from a kind of diary, wherein, during more than thirty years, he occaſionally wrote his ſentiments, on a variety of ſubjects, as they aroſe in his mind, without obſerving any particular order or method, and very ſeldom prefixing a date. In this ſtate it came into the hands of the Editors, to whom the Author had committed the care of his papers, with a diſcretionary power to publiſh or ſuppreſs what they pleaſed. Struck with the remarkable honeſty and wiſdom that appeared in the obſervations it contained, they thought that ſuch a ſelection might be made for the preſs, as would greatly tend to illuſtrate the ſubject of human nature, and a work of grace upon the heart. In order to make theſe ſelect obſervations more uſeful, it was thought neceſſary to reduce them into ſome order, and claſs them under certain heads. This has been attempted in the way which the Editors of Monſ. Paſchal's "Thoughts on Religion" tell us, in their preface, they purſued. A diſtinct chapter is allotted to each ſubject, and a regular method is aimed at in the order and connection of the ſubjects. This attempt was not without its difficulties. Many of the Author's obſervations being of a complex kind, it was not eaſy to fix upon the leading ſentiment, ſo as to aſſign them their proper place. Some inaccuracy will perhaps be diſcovered, and ſome indulgence is requeſted of the public in this reſpect. Under the head of *Confeſſions*, which is the title of the firſt chapter, will be found moſt of thoſe devout aſpirations and reflections, whether of a penitential

or

or thankful kind which lie ſcattered about in the Author's diary; and under the term *Chriſtian Life*, which is the title of another chapter, the Editors meant to give all his obſervations that relate to thoſe exerciſes, conflicts, and circumſtances that peculiarly conſtitute and attend the "Life of God in the Soul of Man."

The reader has been prepared for that appearance of inconſiſtency which he will meet with in the following work. if he will but keep in remembrance the exiſtence of two oppoſite principles in a believer's breaſt, and is able to enter into the meaning of the Apoſtle's character of himſelf and his brethren "as ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing," he will ſee nothing abſurd or contradictory in our Author's views. Whatever belongs to the dark ſide of the ſubject, ſuch as the guilt and miſery of our fallen ſtate, the pride and hypocriſy that lurks within us, and the bitter and deadly workings of our carnal mind, will chiefly be found in the chapter of *Human Depravity*. On the other hand, that which relates to the bright ſide of the ſubject, viz. the comfortable doctrine of juſtification, the bleſſed hope of eternal life, and the rich conſolation which the goſpel affords, will principally be met with under the following titles—*Jeſus Chriſt*—*Faith*—*Heaven*. The chapter on Reſignation will include the Author's thoughts on the benefit of affliction, and the uſe of the pains, diſeaſes, and croſſes that attend this mortal life. The connection between the titles of the other chapters, and the ſentiments they contain,

tain, will, perhaps, be found sufficiently obvious. In order to avoid the inconvenience of an endless multiplication of heads, it was thought expedient to reduce them to their present number, and to admit many of the observations into the chapters where they stand, with a considerable latitude of interpretation.

This preface is a vile slander upon the New Testament, — and an encouragement to slothful professors of PRIVATE christianity, who make Christ the Minister of sin, and who are of the Antinomian breed. — Reader, if thou lovest thy soul, beware of Calvinism. — Depend wholly upon Christ for a Title to heaven, and be attentive to the Holy Ghost, that thou mayest be his living Temple, then shalt thou be holy and happy without staying, for death to destroy sin. 1 John, 1. 5 — 8. S. Bradburn.

BRITISH MUSEUM 24 DE 75

Read in London, 1787. And again in P. Dock, Feb. 5. 1803. when I wrote the above.

PRIVATE THOUGHTS

UPON

RELIGION, &c.

CHAP. I.

CONFESSIONS.

O LORD, I yield myſelf to the clear radiance and full diſcovery of thy word, to be convinced by it of ſin. I know, with infallible certainty, that I have ſinned ever ſince I could diſcern betwixt good and evil, in thought, word, and deed; in every period, condition, and relation of life; every day againſt every commandment.

Thy dread Majeſty I have not reverenced; thy ſovereign authority and abſolute right over me I have not kept in mind; I have ſet no value upon communion with thee; my heart has been alienated from thee, my will bent againſt thee, and I have lived inordinately to myſelf, ſeeking only my own eaſe in worldly things, and neglecting my portion in thee.

I have not made a conſcience of improving the talents thou gaveſt me for the benefit of others and

the good of my own ſoul, but moſt ſhamefully and wickedly waſted my time in impertinent viſiting, idle amuſements, riot and exceſs, and all manner of ſenſual indulgence.

I have been proud and envious; wrathful, uncharitable and cenſorious; moroſe, ill-natured, and imperious where I was obliged to ſhew the greateſt kindneſs, and ungrateful to my beſt benefactors. I ſhall never be better till I know how bad I am, and pray with more feeling.

I am in danger of loſing two of the moſt precious things in the world, Gods's favour and my own ſoul, and yet at eaſe. It is the deſperateneſs of my diſtemper that I am at eaſe.

I am lying under the curſe of a diſobedient, paſſionate will. What pleaſes God does not pleaſe me; but often vexes, frets, hurts me, harrows up my ſoul.

Oh! when ſhall I feel the plague of ſin, and long for deliverance from it as I would from a ſore diſeaſe in my body.

Sin is ſtill here, deep in the centre of my heart, and twiſted about every fibre of it. Does my deliverance conſiſt chiefly in the removal of it from my heart, or in the remiſſion which is in Chriſt?

Is ſin ſuch a plague and burden to me, that I ſhould think myſelf undone if there was no God

to

to hear and anſwer my prayers for deliverance from it?

Who was it that ſaid, "I will not ſin againſt my God? Who can ſay leſs? Why do not I ſay it?

All I have been doing in religion; the opinions I have taken up; the appearance of it I have put on; my ſeeming zeal for it has too often been nothing but a contrivance to keep the Spirit's fire out of my heart, and give ſome kind of eaſe to my mind and conſcience without coming to the true point, viz. pure conformity to the will of God, with a total denial of ſelf.

My great controverſy is with myſelf, and I am reſolved to have none with others till I have put things upon a better footing at home.

What will the next hour do for me that this cannot?

Paſt ſin I ſee and lament; but not preſent ſin, though ſtruggling againſt it, or not in all its guilt, and as I ſhall ſee it hereafter.

Go, ſin, (and, O Lord, do thou ſpeak it this day with my heart) go for ever, thou rebel to God; thou crucifier of Chriſt; thou griever of the Spirit; thou curſe of the earth; thou poiſon in my blood; thou plague of my ſoul, and bane of all my happineſs.

I content myſelf with telling God that I want his graces, and yet can bear well enough to be without them.

Devoted to eaſe and ſloth, never eaſy but in doing nothing, and always contriving to have nothing to do.

If I love God, I muſt love him for his holineſs, and how then can I love ſin? Nevertheleſs I have full conviction in myſelf that I do not hate it as I ought.

Where have I not ſinned? The reaſon is evident, I carry myſelf about with me.

I would have joy of Chriſt, and take poſſeſſion of his benefits, without his heart, without entering into his views, or taking part in his labours.

It is my great unhappineſs and curſe of nature that I cannot pleaſe both God and myſelf.

"Grant that this day I fall into no ſin." When I was ſaying theſe words, Feb. 23, 1763, I ſinned grievouſly by an uncharitable thought of C. S.

I pray faintly, and with reſerve, merely to quiet conſcience for preſent eaſe, and almoſt wiſhing not to be heard. In a full prayer for full deliverance there is hope.

All

All my reading and purſuit of knowledge is more with a view to talking than my own private uſe, or the benefit of others.

Day by day I am in purſuit of pleaſure from nominal gratifications, and my life is ſtill propped by ſenſuality, only a little more decently than formerly.

I ſhould be ready to die with ſhame and vexation if others knew what I have been doing in the world, and what I am; it gives me but little concern that the eye of God is always upon me.

In bodily ailments I look out every way for help without delay. I have no ſuch anxiety for my ſoul, though I feel the plague of it and know of an infallible Phyſician.

If I might have my beloved enjoyment, and live cordially to my own will as long as I pleaſed, I do not perceive that I ſhould chooſe to die ſoon, and go to heaven for the ſake of being with God and freed from ſin.

In a ſtate of greater danger and horror from ſelf (January 1768) than if I was in a town on fire at midnight, with two lions, a tyger, and three bears broke looſe, and devouring all before them.

Two things I know with infallible certainty, that I cannot help myſelf, and that I am unhelped. I have wiſhes, form reſolutions, make efforts,

ſay prayers, mention particular ſins; but do not find that I am a jot better. The only hopeful thing in my caſe is, that I do not deſpair.

Whether a late occurrence was a providential direction or not, it has convinced me beyond all doubt that I never reflected enough upon the uncertainty and emptineſs of worldly things, and that my heart and treaſure are not ſo much in heaven as I imagined.

"Wo be to the idol (Heb. good for nothing) ſhepherd!" I am a ſinful creature. Lord pardon me and pity my weakneſs, and make me duly ſenſible of what I am, that I may humble myſelf before thee. Preſerve me from ſelf-love, and from the love of the world, and from the workings of a carnal mind, and bring me back again to thyſelf through Jeſus Chriſt by the Spirit. Amen.

I want one point of ſelfiſhneſs, which is to convert the word of God to my own uſe. All the reflections I make upon the pride, corruption, blindneſs, and deadly fall of man; upon the neceſſity of the daily croſs, and death to the world, I beſtow freely upon others; and am hindered by the deceitfulneſs of my own heart, and the artifice of the devil, from turning the edge of them upon myſelf.

I have juſt religion enough to make me gloomy, moroſe, proud, cenſorious; but not enough to make me cheerful, eaſy, good-natured, humble, and charitable.

The

The ſame failings, perverſe tempers, and evil habits which I ſee, and abhor juſtly, in others, I know and believe to be in myſelf, and poſſibly in a higher degree; and yet in ſpite of my reaſon, judgment, and conviction, in ſpite of all the efforts I can uſe, I neither do nor can ſee them in the ſame light in myſelf that I do in others.

I have lived hitherto in a continual ſtate of darkneſs, deception, and lying to myſelf. Tho' I have practiſed one kind of ſelf-denial, ſo as to be taken by ſome, and almoſt to take myſelf, for a chriſtian indeed, I now find, by a recent inſtance, that the chain which binds me to the world is as ſtrong as ever. I am reſolved for the future not to believe any thing of myſelf till after a ſufficient time of trial.

I want humility. For what? To be admired. My pride will hardly let me believe this, though I am ſure it is truth.

A certain perſon told me, that in adviſing, ſpeaking of religious matters, and recommending religious truths, I was fierce, paſſionate, uncondeſcending. Bleſſed be God, I am ſenſible of it; and may God bleſs my friend for the admonition; tho' I fear it proceeded in part from anger. See and conſider Galatians v. 19,-26. vi. 1,-3. I cannot help obſerving that I had a very ſtrong touch of this matter upon my ſpirit a day or two before my friend told me of it.

When

When I hear of any crime or ſeries of villany, I think I have got a plauſible occaſion of giving full ſcope to the paſſion of hatred, and my indignation immediately riſes to the utmoſt: But then I feel diſtinctly within myſelf that it is not againſt the ſin, but the perſon; and, without any mixture of pity, I fairly give him up to deſtruction, and could rejoice to be the author and inſtrument of his ſufferings. And tho' this might be excuſed, as proceeding from a proper deteſtation of vice, yet I fear there is little in it at the bottom beſides pride and ſelf-conceit, which are always accompanied with a lurking, diabolical malignity of heart.

When we ſee others aſtoniſhingly blind to their failings, I ſuppoſe it to be my own caſe, and ſhould think that man my friend who helps to open my eyes.

The great work is ſtill to do; the heart is kept back, and God will accept nothing leſs from me. My guilt is damnable in with-holding it, becauſe I know and believe his love, and what Chriſt has done to gain my conſent; O heavens! to what? My own happineſs.

I ſhould be ready and willing to ſhew my warmeſt gratitude to the perſon who can give me eaſe from pain, or tell me of a cure for my body. O Jeſus! what haſt thou not done and ſuffered for my ſoul! how coldly do I think of it; how poorly do I requite it!

Thank

Thank God for decay, pain, and ſuffering; thank God that I was born to die; thank God that I can die; thank God the time is near; thank God for the proſpect and hope of a better world; and thank God for ſtrong conſolation through Chriſt.

I had rather ſee my own faults than other people's.

I will not form any ſchiſm, nor have another religion for the world. Help me God.

I have been fool enough all my life to do every thing with a view to pleaſe, and, for the moſt part, to defeat my own deſign.

I have been ready enough all my life to prefer myſelf to all others. When ſhall I be Chriſtian enough to honour all men, and ſink down into my own nothingneſs?

St. Paul knew human nature but too well, when he ſaid, "our feet are ſwift to ſhed blood." Romans iii. 15. I proteſt I am often catching myſelf at it; and do verily believe that, if we could be ſincere, we ſhould find within ourſelves abundant proof of the aſſertion. Strange, that I ſhould be conſcious of ſuch a nature, and yet unhumbled! but then at the worſt, and in the worſt of men, there is ſtill a capability of goodneſs; and, therefore, ſo long as I have breath, I will preſent my caſe before the God of my life. "Thou, who

"who hateſt evil infinitely, and infinitely willeſt "the deſtruction of it, and wouldeſt not the "death of a ſinner, diſcover to me this whole "depth and myſtery of iniquity, that, ſeeing it "by a ray of light from thee, I may be inſpired "with thy own hatred of it, and enabled by thee "to remove all the impediments to the manifeſta-"tion of thy power and preſence in my ſoul."

I cannot perceive any other principles in myſelf than thoſe of fear and ſhame. I would diſobey God if I durſt; and, in ſome inſtances, I even durſt do it, upon a confuſed hope of mercy, or future repentance, if it was not for fear of hurting my reputation.

When I return to a better temper, after having been under the impreſſions of black melancholy; that is, from being moroſe, ſullen, diſcontented, impatient, quarrelſome. I cannot help ſaying, what a beaſt and a devil I was; meaning that I am ſo no longer. And an open confeſſion of this kind is looked upon as a mark of great ingenuouſneſs, when, in truth, it is nothing but ſelf-deception, counterfeit humility, and a ſtratagem to reinſtate myſelf in my own good opinion, or the eſteem of others. The ſtile of the confeſſion ſhould run in the preſent tenſe I am, I am, I am, for the nature is the ſame, though at preſent it may be ſmoothed over with a handſome appearance, as a filthy puddle is always the ſame, though it does not always ſmell alike.

Prayer,

Prayer and other ſpiritual exerciſes are often a wearineſs to me; a taſk and a force upon nature. I am but too well pleaſed with pretences for omitting them; and when they are over I feel myſelf at eaſe, as it were, after the removal of a heavy weight: "Yet thou, O my Saviour, doſt warrant and command my importunity and earneſtneſs in aſking under all diſcouragements; I will therefore ſtill preſent myſelf before the throne of grace, notwithſtanding the want of ſenſible conſolations. Fear not, my ſoul, the operations of the Spirit are in ſecret, and the daily growth of the ſpiritual man as imperceptible as that of corn." Mark iv. John iii.

I have all my life long been conſidering what I would do in ſuch and ſuch circumſtances, and putting off the ſeaſon of working to ſome imaginary period, without ever duly conſidering what I can do at preſent, or uſing the opportunities and abilities I have.

It is in vain to ſtruggle againſt nature; or, which is the ſame thing, habit. No caution, conſideration, or effort, howſoever repeated, can ſet me free. I find myſelf exactly in the ſtate deſcribed by St. Paul, Rom. vii. and am always crying out with him, "Who ſhall deliver me?" What immediately follows fills me with hope and conſolation. I am abſolutely certain that my deliverance muſt come from God; and if he pleaſes to offer it, I will not be ſo perverſe as to take up needleſs exceptions to his method. There is a

great deal in the perſon and religion of Chriſt to engage my attention; and I want deliverance ſo much, that I could almoſt accept it from the hands of Mahomet, if he could give it.

I have for ſome years been giving myſelf airs in religion, and aſſuming a port which does by no means belong to me. I fancied that I muſt neceſſarily be ſomething extraordinary, becauſe I endeavoured to be ſo. I am ſenſible that all the while I advanced in nothing but outſide and hypocriſy. I now ſee the reaſon of it. The work was my own, and the event accordingly; ſhame, and confuſion, and conviction of my own impotence.

I know that I am hateful and contemptible, and yet I cannot help idolizing that painted thing which I myſelf am; nor do I ever think worſe of any man for being ſo miſtaken as to offer me the incenſe of his eſteem.

In points wherein I thought it was clear, I could almoſt ſtand upon my own defence before God, I daily diſcover my hypocriſy and infinite defects. "Lord, what is man! in thy ſight ſhall no fleſh be juſtified; no not in any one inſtance!"

The doctrine of faith in a Redeemer I find will be no motive of love and obedience to me, or encouragement to inculcate it zealouſly and heartily to others, till it is apprehended by me in a different manner than at preſent it is.

I ſeem to myſelf as a dark flint. By what kind of a ſtroke God will fetch light out of me I know not.

I would not give myſelf one hour's trouble for what the world calls immortal glory; and yet I am ſure that a ſenſe of reputation, or rather dread of ſhame, mixes itſelf with all I do.

I could wiſh to have a perfect benevolence for the moſt contemptible creature upon earth, and at the ſame time that no other object had more power to entangle my affections.

It is a dreadful truth, and, if it were not for the aids and conſolations of the Goſpel, would even kill me to think it, that the ſole ground, being, and eſſence of rectitude in the ſoul, and, conſequently, all its capacities for happineſs, is a hearty love and liking of God for what he is, and for all that he is.

When God takes off his hand, and leaves me to myſelf, as I believe he does for my conviction and humiliation, I can feel nothing within myſelf but the temper and foundation of hell.

I perceive by ſome fatal ſymptoms, that higher qualifications for uſefulneſs at preſent, would only fill me with pride; it is therefore better for me that they ſhould be with-holden till I am diſpoſed to receive them with proper humility, and as the means of a bleſſed intercourſe between God and my own ſoul.

Lately reſolving and praying, as I thought ſincerely, againſt a certain ſourneſs and malignity of temper which I am ſubject to, all on a ſudden, without any preceding cauſe, or occaſion given, I was hurried as it were forcibly into it, and found myſelf more under the tormenting influence of it than ever I had been in all my life.

Whenever I attempt to pray for others, I am ſoon made ſenſible that I do it in a cold, heartleſs manner; a plain indication that love is not at the bottom. It is an awful moment when the ſoul meets God in private to ſtand the teſt of his all-ſearching eye.

My ſtate of being, continuance in it, and every thing relating to it, is ordered by God in ſuch a manner as he knows will conduce moſt to his own glory in my happineſs and ſalvation; and yet I am conſcious to myſelf of a ſettled adherence to my own choice, and a perpetual ſtruggling againſt what he wills and ordains. What ground is here for humiliation! What farther proof do I need of my corruption! And what a jeſt it is to think of ſetting up upon the ſtock of a little morality or outward decency of behaviour, while this accurſed root of impiety remains in us!

When I am well, I think I could die contentedly; when I am ſick, I am impatient to be well again.

Oh!

Oh! how I wiſh utterly to diſregard, and be unmoved at the contempt, peeviſhneſs, and perverſe oppoſition of others; and at the ſame time to pity the unhappy ſtate of mind, and love the perſon it proceeds from. "Ariſe, O God, and let thine enemies be ſcattered. Give me this proof of thy love to me, and power in me; this foretaſte of the heavenly happineſs; this earneſt of thy Spirit in my heart; this bleſſed grace of Charity, by which only I can know and be like thee, and be fitted to dwell with thee in the regions of everlaſting peace and love."

If any man, pretending to be humble, tells me that God has given him a ſight of his own frightful uglineſs I can believe him; but not if he pretends to come by his humility in any other way.

I ſee enough in others for a ground in all to be humble; and yet this very thing prevents me from being ſo. I cannot help comparing myſelf with them inſtead of the rule of perfection.

I am perpetually looking out for ſome fitneſs in myſelf, ſome procuring meritorious cauſe of God's acceptance of me, as if I could never be ſafe till I could challenge reward at his hands as a debt; and yet I believe this is pure oppoſition to the goſpel ſcheme, and the very infidelity which St. Paul, in particular, levels all his reaſonings againſt, the more dangerous as being the more ſpecious, and at all times the religion of the more ſober and rational part of mankind.

I plainly perceive that I am what I think hateful in others, and what I really hate and deſpiſe others for.

There can be no repenting, aſking forgiveneſs, or deſiring a change upon a general confuſed apprehenſion of our unworthineſs. We can only come to Chriſt with a catalogue of our ſins in our hands; and if the holy Spirit does not aſſiſt in drawing it up, we ſhall omit a hundred times more than we ſet down.

Till we have a full belief and apprehenſion of the ſcripture doctrines of the remiſſion of ſins, we are under a kind of neceſſity of denying, extenuating, and explaining away the guilt of them; and this ſeals us up in blindneſs, impenitence, and hardneſs of heart.

If I acquieſce in the act of prayer, without deſiring to receive what I aſk for, I never pray.

We are apt to acquieſce in the bare act of prayer, and can be well enough content all our lives to go without the ſpiritual good things we pray for. The caſe is plain, we do not deſire them.

I want to ſink myſelf in my own opinion, truly and ſincerely below other people; and I verily believe that we can never have any clear ſight and knowledge of ourſelves and others, till we ſtand upon lower ground than we are naturally apt to do.

For

For a great part of my life I did not know that I was poor, and naked, and blind, and miſerable. I have known it for ſome time, without feeling it. Thank God, I now begin to be pinched with it. Stand aſide, pride, for a moment, and let me ſee that ugly thing myſelf.

I know and can tell my ſins to God, but to very little purpoſe; as to any real abhorrence or forſaking of them, unleſs he is pleaſed to tell them to me.

I believe the damnableneſs of ſin in others, but not in myſelf.

Could I bear to be the author of a treatiſe which ſhould be the means of enlightening and converting thouſands, and be without the credit of it, or ſee it all given to another?

What I ſtick to as a teſt in point of duty or religious perfection, is this, can I do it of myſelf? If I can, I conclude at once that it does not come up to what God requires of me.

I do not perceive that I have any real pity for the calamities of others: If they happen in an enemy's country, I rejoice at them, and wiſh they were greater. If this is not a diabolical temper, what is?

I can make a ſhift to cheat the world, but I can cheat myſelf no longer. The inward maſk is taken off, at leaſt in part, and I am uneaſy till I ſee more of my own deformity.

"Lay not up for yourſelves treaſures upon earth, &c." I had rather enter into the meaning of this ſaying, and be in full poſſeſſion of the ſpirit of it, than be lord of the univerſe.

O, my God! grant me not the turbulent feverish tranſports of a ſickly fancy, not the ſwellings of enthuſiaſtic pride! but freedom from the deteſted rule of paſſion, and perpetual ſerenity from an humble, reſigned, obedient frame of ſpirit!

I ſee and believe the reality and guilt of ſin in Chriſt hanging upon the croſs, and am convinced, with infallible certainty, that the ſcripture lays nothing to the charge of man's nature but what is true; but I cannot ſay that I feel and hate ſin in myſelf in any great degree.

I diſcern clearly that, in all my dealings and converſation with others, I do not ſo much deſire their ſalvation as eſteem.

I ſee very diſtinctly that the will and power in me which unites with God, obeys, and loves, is not from myſelf.

I find, upon a ſtrict ſcrutiny into myſelf, that I am not ſo much influenced by a ſenſe of reputation as to deny a perſecuted truth; nevertheleſs, I plainly perceive that, if I could be inſtrumental in ſpreading it, the great motive to it would not be love of the truth, of Chriſt, or the ſouls of men, and that my chief pleaſure would ariſe from the credit of it.

Little children have but one appetite, know what they want, and can be quieted with nothing elſe. Would to God I was ſo.

Oh! how many thouſands at this hour are worſhipping God in ſpirit and truth, and labouring to advance his kingdom! and I ſtill ſtand idle, cold, and lifeleſs; tongue-tied and fearful, as faſt bound to the world, and as averſe to thorough work as ever.

It was not only Pontius Pilate and the Jews, but my ſins, I myſelf that condemned Chriſt, that ſcourged him, and ſpit upon him, that drove the nails into his hands and feet, and pierced his ſide, and forced him to cry out, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me! He conſented to all this once. What infinity of baſeneſs then to crucify him afreſh!

God ſometimes gives me a taſte of what he will do for me, and takes it away again, to let me ſee what I cannot do for myſelf.

Is my retiring to converſe with God, a ſtate of enjoyment? or an earneſt ſeeking to him in trouble and ſelf-abaſement, from a ſenſe of the greateſt of all wants? Or is it affectation, and a force upon nature, proceeding from no real deſire, producing no effect? Or is it ſometimes one, ſometimes the other of theſe, and ſometimes a mixture of all three?

It is a bleſſed prayer, "O God, thou knoweſt that I am in trouble, that I want thee, and deſire nothing but thee, and muſt be for ever miſerable without thee!"

O! when ſhall I ſit down to the rich feaſt of inward tranquillity, from a ſettled ſtate of meekneſs, lowlineſs, faithfulneſs to God, and independence on every thing but him!

I begin to have an intimate ſenſe of God's preſence, and to tranſact with him as near me. Bleſſed be God for it. May he continue and increaſe it!

Perhaps what I do ſee and acknowledge of myſelf, is not the worſt by far.

The evil which ſcripture lays to the charge of mankind, I feel in myſelf, and ſee plainly in others. I ſee farther that it is the root and eſſence of miſery, and that without a real vital change it is impoſſible I ſhould ever be happy. And yet, notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding this ſelf-conviction, notwithſtanding that ſcripture tells me that the conſequence of an unregenerate nature will be eternal ſeparation from God, I do not perceive that it comes with full weight upon my mind.

I have nothing to do, in my preſent circumſtances, with any man, ſect, or opinion. I am ſick of a dangerous diſtemper, and muſt not ſtand reading books on the nature of diſeaſes, but look out immediately for a cure, eſpecially as I know of an infallible phyſician.

Do I bring myſelf to the touchſtone of truth, or make myſelf the touchſtone?

Oh! if the world knew, or I myſelf knew, what God knows of me, how ſhould I then appear!

It is cauſe enough for humility to know that we are not humble.

I find that the chief ingredient of duty, the one ſteady invariable principle of true holineſs, without which all I do is nothing, yea, no better than ſin, has hitherto been much wanting, viz. a prevailing regard to the glory of God.

Many of our uſeful thoughts die away without doing their office; vaniſhing like bubbles almoſt as ſoon as they appear.

I know I cannot, and if I might I would not, be happy in any other way than by the love of God and his pefections, conformity to his will, deſire to enjoy him, and aſſimilation to him in a will to all goodneſs. I do not pay a ſacred ſupreme regard to the will of God; I do not ſet it up as the mark I am aiming at in every thought, word, and action, nor embrace it ſteadily, inſtantly, cheerfully, nor live upon it as the food of my ſoul. I know why I am not happy.

My ſins brought Chriſt to me and me to Chriſt.

O weeping love, O praying love, O working love; but inſtead thereof, ſloth, indifference, coldneſs, ſelfiſhneſs.

If God would leave me to my own choice, I know I ſhould deſire above all things to continue in his hands, and be wholly at his diſpoſal.

I wear a maſk to myſelf, and for my life cannot help fancying that I am what I would ſeem to be, and know I am not.

If any man was to entruſt me with a ſum for the uſe of others, and I could ſecrete the whole or part of it without its being known, my conſcience would not let me do it; I could never be guilty of ſuch baſeneſs. I am ſenſible that God does ſo put talents into my hands, and knows to a farthing what I give or keep back; and yet I am not

not ſo ſcrupulous and exact with regard to him, nor anxious to keep a juſt account. What can be the meaning of this? And why is conſcience ſo unfeeling and falſe to its office, where he is concerned? I cannot fathom the depth of this thought; I cannot eſtimate my guilt; I ſtand amazed at my contempt of God, and ſhrink back from myſelf with horror.

Aged 63. I have made experiment what life is. The retroſpect is very mortifying, and I ſhould neither be able to bear up againſt it, nor endure the little time that is to come, without Jeſus.

The dreadful and ever-memorable earthquake at Liſbon! It is man, and not God, that throws nature into convulſions. O my ſoul, art thou an earth-ſhaker?

Every hour comes to us charged with duty, and the moment it is paſt, returns to heaven to regiſter itſelf, how ſpent. My hours how trifled, ſauntered, dozed, ſenſualized, ſinned away!

I ſhould be ſorry to have it known what I am, how little I know, and what I have been doing in the world; and yet I am ſure I ſwell with ſelf-conceit, long for and expect applauſe, and catch greedily at it, where I know it is falſely given. Horrid depravity and meanneſs of ſoul!

It is hard to ſit down in the loweſt room; not becauſe I am bidden, or to ſave appearances, but becauſe I know it to be my place.

I do not think of myſelf according to what I know of myſelf.

Would I chooſe that God ſhould take me out of the world, to reſcue me from a temptation which he ſees would be too hard for me, and to prevent my falling into ſin? If not, I am either fearleſs of ſin, or immoderately fond of life, or both.

I am horribly proud without ground or pretence, and with great cauſe for humiliation. I know this, and ſtill I am horribly proud.

I ſee in other ſinners what I am; in Jeſus what I ſhould be.

Checked, becauſe ſoon to pray, and for the eaſe of my own mind in the duty, more than from any pure principle, or ſteady ſacred regard to God.

I have juſt enough to keep a ſickly hope alive, but not the ſenſe and enjoyment of ſpiritual health.

I can forgive others more eaſily than myſelf. But, query, whether this is not rather the effect

of

of pride to find I am no better, than real humiliation. For true compunction, repentance towards God by a work of the Spirit, is for ſin as ſin, and for all ſin, ſecret as well as open. I have reaſon to think that I grieve and feel much more for a ſin which is ſeen and obſerved, than for a greater which is not.

I ſhould not care if all the world ſaw my ſin, if I could be ſure that God did not. And why do I dread his knowledge of me? Not ſo much from a genuine concern for having offended ſo gracious and good a being, as fear of his puniſhment.

Whatever graces I pray for, whatever good I do, is too much with a view to ſelf, for the eaſe and ſatisfaction of my mind, for reputation, to preſerve my own good opinion, with too little regard to the glory of God, and the benefit of others.

If I had been leſs a ſinner, I ſhould probably have known leſs of Chriſt, and of my obligation to him, than I do; and without the knowledge of Chriſt ſaving me from the curſe and ruin of my ſin, I am ſure I ſhould have been leſs concerned for it, and afraid of it, than I am.

I never was thankful, as I ought, for the common bleſſings of providence, for health and abundance; and, behold! I am for pain, and think I could be ſo in want. Whoſe work is this?

I ſee the devil's hook, and yet cannot help nibbling at his bait.

I can be courteous, humane, beneficent, and abſtain from outward ſin with hard ſtruggling; but who ſhall make me humble, charitable, and pure in heart?

I believe I am not what I ſhould be; I believe I ſhall be what I am not; I believe in the power of God; I believe in my own weakneſs.

Inactive and ſilent for fear of giving offence, for eaſe and quiet, for want of love and real concern for the ſpiritual good of others, and all from a root of unbelief.

The evil which I know and feel in myſelf, though not denied, cauſes no ſuitable diſlike or ſelf-abhorrence; what I ſee or ſuppoſe to be in others, I am too apt heartily to deſpiſe them for. What blindneſs, pride, and malevolence!

I can ſay truly, I have great need of Chriſt: Thank God, I can ſay boldly, I have a great Chriſt for my need.

The world in my heart is a worſe diſtemper than any that Chriſt cured. O Jeſu!

What ſhall I do to live one day without ſin?

Four things are a grief of heart to me, that I do not love God more, nor hate ſin more, nor abhor myſelf more, and that the world generally thinks ſo much better of me, as a Chriſtian, than I deſerve.

"Mortify your members:" I have not had this end ſufficiently in view, and hardly ever thought duly of any ſuch thing.

At the age of ſixty, I thought it humility enough to confeſs myſelf a threeſcore years old ſinner; little imagining that I muſt ſay the ſame if I lived to be fourſcore.

Much forgiven, and little love: How is it?

Is there any thing in my heart or life diſpleaſing to God? The queſtion muſt be anſwered.

I am continually looking for the ſubſtantial ground, and adequate meritorious cauſe of juſtification in myſelf, whereas it is ſolely in Chriſt; and though I am anſwerable to him for the gratitude, fidelity, and loyalty of a pure heart, it is not the cauſe, but the effect and conſequence of my ſalvation by him.

Jan. 23, 1765. It was evident to me that for a worldly advantage I could and would do and forbear what I do not for God and Heaven.

Feb. 15, 1765. Is there, is there, O my ſoul, a call this day to God, to his obedience, to purity of heart, to love, to an humble hope of being owned by him, and living with him for ever! — There is.

If I knew that Chriſt died for me only, it would not kindle in me one ſpark of love without a divine operation on my ſoul. I have ſufficient obligations to him, acknowledge the debt, and would fain pay ſome part of it from a feeling of gratitude, but find my heart is cold as a ſtone.

"My ſoul doth magnify the Lord, and my ſpirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." So I ſaid, January 16, 17, 1767, for one whole night and day, and thought I ſhould never loſe the experience; but at the ſame time, the Song of Moſes, for deliverance at the Red Sea, was preſented to my mind: In three days they came to Marah. In one day it was Marah with me; all was gone.

Chriſt has removed the burden of ſin from my conſcience a thouſand times; and as often as he takes it off I lay it on again.

Read and pray, think and pray, pray and fear not. Lord God, thou knoweſt my prayer is for mercy, and ſtrength to keep mercy; to believe and rejoice; to believe and adore; to believe and love; to believe and have no will but to pleaſe thee; to believe and die to the world; and thou knoweſt

knoweſt that I proſtrate myſelf before thee as a ſinful, helpleſs creature; placing no confidence in my own ſtrength, attainments, willing or running, but truſting wholly in thy grace and power for the pardon of all my ſins, and the ſupply of all my wants.

God help me; I am ſo fooliſh as to expect happineſs, with a great remainder of ſin about me, if not all I was born with.

So long as there is one ſpeck of ſin remaining, perfect happineſs is impoſſible.

Well may I who am ſo poor in love and peaceableneſs, polluted in heart, deſtitute of holy zeal, be required to be poor in ſpirit, to mourn, to be meek, to hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs.

Feb. 23, 1767. A call was given me from the Spirit to ſee ſin in all its guilt, malignity, and curſe; truly to abhor it; to have my very ſoul bent againſt it, and to dread it more than death.

No ſlave in Turkey ever wiſhed for deliverance more than I do for Chriſt's freedom.

Oh! how happy ſhall I be; what cauſe of rejoicing, what ground of adoration and thankfulneſs ſhall I have, when I perceive as clearly within myſelf that the love of God is uppermoſt in my heart, and takes place of all other loves, as I do that I love myſelf above any thing in the world.

I like Chriſt's work ſo well, that I do not care how long I live to do it, nor how ſoon I die, that I may know and ſerve him better.

If I do not devote myſelf to the obedience of God with full purpoſe of heart, and ſteady, ſole regard to his will, no number of acts, religious or moral, will recommend me to his favour; my whole life is ſin.

Let others boaſt of ſelf-power and deſpiſe help, I have great need to pray.

Aug. 13, 1765. I had for many hours a ſtrong, lightſome, and over-powering ſenſe of joy, without any preceding cauſe of reading, thought, meditation, or action of any kind, to be the ground of it; but found myſelf all on a ſudden drawn to God, laid at the Redeemer's feet in faith, admiration, and thankfulneſs; deſiring to be led by the Spirit, and making profeſſions of love and obedience. I know ſuch comforts are not to be lived upon, nor proofs of a high ſtate of ſpirituality. Suppoſing them to be real influxes of the Spirit, they are to be conſidered as calls to greater ſincerity, circumſpection, and faithfulneſs, if not forerunners of trial and ſufferings.

I ſhould be better contented to be what I am, a fallen, helpleſs creature, if my pride would let me.

I never was thrifty for myſelf; and if I had, I ſhould have been covetous. Thrift for God ſhall now be thought of, and that will make me generous and free as air.

Though I have one foot in the grave, and am ſenſible that the world has left me, yet I do not find that I have left it; but ſtill delude myſelf with a vain hope of ſome kind of enjoyment from it, and remain too much under the power of ſenſuality.

I had rather be caſt into the burning fiery furnace, or the lion's den, than ſuffer ſin to lie quietly in my heart.

I do not know the perſon whoſe good opinion I do not naturally love more than their ſoul.

I had a full conviction that I ſtand more in awe of P. L. than God.

I have conſcience enough to make me uneaſy in ſin, but not enough to keep me from it.

In the caſe of others, I am apt to be angry with the ſinner and not the ſin; in my own, with the ſin at moſt, but not the ſinner.

I am ſtrict and ſcrupulous in matters which do not much thwart my will, nor bear too hard upon fleſh and blood. So pride thrives, and conſcience is kept from being over troubleſome.

I am often thinking whether I renounce ſin upon right grounds: Do I renounce it upon any?

The world may well excuſe me for wearing a maſk to hide my guiltineſs from it. I put the ſame cheat full as much upon myſelf, and am ſtill in the attempt of painting and white-waſhing to God.

The world ſays of me, "a good ſort of man, but a little too ſtrict and preciſe." My real character is rather, "he has not the fear of God before his eyes, neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil."

I can ſee nothing without the Spirit's eyes, but as it were in a miſt. I am fully perſuaded of the truth of ſcripture, and what it tells me of ſin, myſelf, God, Chriſt, and eternity; but with little more effect and true feeling than what I know and believe of ſome remote country in which I have no manner of concern.

If things and providences are not according to my mind, I can diſſemble; but do what I will cannot be pleaſed. Let the thought of my being diſpleaſed with God be ever ſo hard, it is better to know it.

I can truly ſay of every one I know, I hope they are better than myſelf.

I am continually looking at the clouds to know whether I ſhould be pleaſed with God.

You tell me that the remembrance of ſin ſhould be accompanied with ſelf-loathing, and a child-like ingenuous concern for having diſpleaſed God, rather than a ſlaviſh dread of puniſhment. I ſee the reaſon and excellence of ſuch godly ſorrow, but plainly perceive that if I was ſecure from all fear of puniſhment for my ſins, I could eaſily be reconciled to myſelf for having committed them. Since this is the caſe with me, I have great cauſe to be thankful that I am not hidden from myſelf; and I am ſure there is no other way of putting things upon a better footing with my ſoul, than knowing what I am. The Lord keep me cloſe to this prayer in all ſincerity; "try me, O God, and ſearch the ground of my heart."

Sin is ſtill ſtrong, with the grave opening, and ready to cloſe upon me.

I could tear my heart out for not being God's. I have been deceived all my life by ſayings of philoſophers, ſcraps of verſes, and moſt of all by the pride of my own heart, into an opinion of ſelf-power, which the ſcripture plainly tells me, and I find by repeated fruitleſs efforts, that I have not.

I have great cauſe to be ſorry and aſhamed that any who have a much leſs income than myſelf ſhould be more contented, or that any who have

have more pains and ſufferings ſhould bear them better.

I have ſinned enough, and long enough, and tho' I would give the world to ſin no more, dare not ſay, I ſhall not.

I think ſo much of what others ſhould do, that I cannot find time to beſtow one thought of that kind upon myſelf.

If the devil could take Chriſt from me, I ſhould be ready for any wickedneſs.

The more I am terrified with a ſight and ſenſe of ſin, the more precious Chriſt is, and the faſter I lay hold on him.

My apprehenſion of ſin is faint, and chiefly ſpeculative: If I had a true ſenſe and feeling of it, I ſhould be much more pained with it, than I am with the ſtone, and gladly ſubmit to any method of cure.

My death will be no more regarded by the world, than that of a worm or fly; but is of infinite conſequence to me.

If I could make myſelf patient, reſigned, and thankful, I had rather that God ſhould do it, as it would be a token and proof of his love, and favourable preſence with me.

If I felt for the diſorder and danger of my ſoul, as I do for my body in pain and ſickneſs, I ſhould look out every way for help; be a thouſand times more anxious for its recovery than I am; ſubmit to any method of cure, and ſay unfeignedly to God, "ure, feri, ſeca;" that is, burn, ſtrike, cut.

Whenever I do any good, inſtead of applauding myſelf, or ſuppoſing that Chriſt will place it to my account in a way of merit, I ſhould conſider what more I might have done, and have not.

When I am well, I think I can put myſelf into the hands of God, and be content to be at his diſpoſal; when pain comes, I had rather chooſe for myſelf, and am impatient to be at eaſe.

If a perſon whom I eſteemed and loved, and abſolutely depended on for my ſupport and happineſs, was to preſcribe a rule of conduct to me, I ſhould conform to it with pleaſure, and hardly ever deviate from it, eſpecially if I knew he had his eye always upon me. Why then am I not ſo affected towards God, but becauſe I value his favour leſs, or ſtand leſs in awe of him, or judge the performance of his commands to be impoſſible, or truſt unwarrantably in his mercy, and all from a prevalent corruption of heart and nature?

Lord, forgive my ſins, and ſuffer me to keep them: Is this the meaning of my prayers?

I fly from myſelf to God, I appeal from myſelf to Chriſt.

How ſad, to find reaſon, to ſay I ſee God in every thing but myſelf.

I ſee and own my obligations to Chriſt, but have not near ſo lively a ſenſe of them as I have of much inferior kindneſſes, received from another hand. Perhaps the reaſon may be, partly, that I conſider his benefits as neceſſary emanations of divine goodneſs, partly, becauſe he requires things which ſeem hard to me, taking up the croſs, forſaking all, mortification of ſelf, a change of nature and will, and this damps my gratitude to him, though in all reaſon it ſhould increaſe it.

As earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh as ever, and worſe than my former ſelf by an accurſed hypocriſy. Son of David have mercy upon me and heal my ſoul.

All I do is for ſelf, reading, meditating, compoſing, all terminate in ſelf-gratification, with hardly any view to uſefulneſs or general benefit.

If it was put to my choice, whether I would go immediately to heaven, or ſtay longer in this world, I ſhould chooſe the former; but then I believe it would be rather to avoid being thought a fool, and to be rid of the vexations I meet with here than in love to Chriſt, and deſire of the company and delights of heaven.

I find it very difficult to conceive how God can ſhew mercy to me, without ſhewing it to all.

I ſhould think myſelf undone if I might not pray.

The will of God is ſo dear and ſacred to me, as his will, in the love of God, and with a ſincere deſire to pleaſe him, that I would not oppoſe it if he was not preſent or privy to my diſobedience, or I knew certainly that he would not inflict any puniſhment upon me for it.

I do acts of love without love. I do not perceive it to be a nature in me; and I am ſure that if ever I am poſſeſſed of it, it muſt be by a ſupernatural change. Here is work for prayer.

October 26th, 1766. Come, my heart, draw nigh to God for remiſſion and renovation, with fulneſs of deſire for a full work; come now, this moment, as alſo to Jeſus, for all his cleanſing, for waſhing in his blood, for love, for fidelity. Deliver thyſelf into his hands, and beg of him to purge his floor in thee, and make thee pure wheat, fit for his garner. And, O Spirit of holineſs, do thou bring me, in repentance and faith, to the blood of ſprinkling; ſanctify my ſpirit, ſoul, and body; and baptize me with thy fire into obedience and love of the truth.

I puzzle myſelf about the prophecies, eſpecially the Apocalypſe, and am often prying into futu-

rity, but do not advert enough to what I may certainly know without a prophecy, what and where I ſhall be within a few years at the moſt, if I ſuffer ſin to keep poſſeſſion of me; if I do not abhor and caſt it from me in the fear of God; if I do not pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand; if I do not humble myſelf deeply before God; cry earneſtly for mercy, and yield myſelf to him unfeignedly, and with the utmoſt ſincerity of intention for newneſs of heart and ſpirit.

I want forgiveneſs of one ſin, and ſtrength againſt it; but God wants to do more for me, and will forgive and deliver me from none till I make further ſearch into myſelf, and bring my ſins before him altogether.

God hears my prayers for deliverance from one ſin, by holding me under it till I diſcover more, and am led to the root of all ſin in an evil heart, and evil nature.

I cannot work repentance in myſelf, I cannot purify my heart, I cannot change my nature.

"The blood of ſprinkling ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel;"—crieth louder in the ears of God for mercy to mankind, than that of Abel did againſt Cain for vengeance. Why does it not cry as loud in my ears, and in the depth of my heart, for gratitude, for love, for faithful and true allegiance, for zeal and fidelity in the ſervice of my Lord, for obedience to every command,

mand, and to all that is written in his book! Lord Jeſus, thou knoweſt that can only be in a day of power, when thou ſayeſt, ephthatha, and ſpeakeſt thyſelf into my heart. Oh! ſpeak; come quickly to a ſinner bound hand and foot, and lying at the point of death.

My prayers can only be anſwered in the way of a ſevere mortification, and I would have the buſineſs done without.

Decem. 1, 1766. It was ſuggeſted to my heart and conſcience, as by a heavenly voice, that God's command is for an abſolute, immediate renunciation of ſin, and a perpetual, full obedience, and that every thing ſhort of ſuch a purpoſe is prevarication, rebellion, miſery, death.

The ſhame and diſgrace of a certain error in life, though unattended with guilt, gives me more ſenſible compunction and ſorrow of heart than all the ſins I ever committed. I feel in this inſtance how I ſhould be affected towards God on account of ſin, and am not.

That error ſeizing upon the mind as irretrievable, is a reſemblance of hell, and with the bleſſing of God may be the means of keeping me out of it, by leading me to conſider what other errors may be retrievable.

Shut up in ſelf, like a toad in a hole, and as full of venom.

It is my own fault if I do not profit by the defects of others, by taking occaſion from them to prove and exerciſe my own virtue. The queſtion ſhould be, what kind of ſentiment or behaviour does the caſe require?

What has the day done for me? Has it ſet me nearer heaven? Has it brought in an increaſe of knowledge and virtue? Has it been devoted to the ſervice of God and man, or ſpent in ſenſuality and ſelf-pleaſing?

I am grievouſly offended with my pariſhioners, becauſe they will not contribute to my reputation in the world, by being converted by me. Lord, let thy Spirit go with me into the depth of my heart, to ſhew me more and more of its deceit and deſperate wickedneſs.

I plainly perceive that I have horribly abuſed Goſpel-grace, if not to an allowance of ſin, yet to make me leſs fearful of it, and keep off the Spirit's reproof.

In all the good I do, I have little thought but of pleaſing and enjoying myſelf. The enquiry is, how I ſhall find my account in ſuch an action, or courſe of life, in reſpect of eaſe and ſelf-ſatisfaction; and if duty will not pay me ſomething in hand, it is an hundred to one I baulk it. The point ſhould be, not what will pleaſe myſelf but God. The time and manner of enjoyment may be left to him. It appears alſo from hence, that the

the ſuppoſing virtue to be its own reward, is deſtructive of chriſtian hope, and not the way to ſecure the intereſts of virtue, but an unſteady, fallacious principle of action, and would oftener lead us from what is right than to it.

I ſhall never think I live till I deſire to live no longer.

Some fix their eyes ſo much upon the atonement of the croſs, as to be blind to the example of it; others ſo much upon the example as to undervalue the atonement of it. It is a happy art, and the Chriſtian's work, to avoid both extremes: For my own part I find I am more willing that Chriſt ſhould take me unto himſelf for the communication of his benefits than I am to take him into my heart with his pure commands, ſtrict diſcipline, ſelf-denial, and ſuffering ſpirit.

If proclaiming my life before men and angels, will be proclaiming the glory of ſaving grace, let it be done. I do not deſire to have one ſinful act, word, or thought concealed. Forgiveneſs thro' the blood of Chriſt will be to myſelf an endleſs ſpring of admiration, love, and thankſgiving; and the bleſſed company of heaven will join with me in praiſing God and the Lamb for it to all eternity.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE SCRIPTURES.

I Dreamed I ſaw Chriſt curing a diſtempered perſon. I immediately applied to him for my own healing. He aſked in what reſpect? I anſwered, I want ſpiritual healing and forgiveneſs of ſins. He ſeemed to doubt whether I truly deſired it. I fell upon my knees and beſought him earneſtly; on which he ſaid, with a gracious look, "Thy ſins are forgiven thee; go, and ſin no more." I was tranſported at the words, and wept tears of joy in great abundance. My reflections on waking was, that I had as full aſſurance from the word of God of the remiſſion of ſins, and as plain a command to ſin no more, as if it was ſpoken to me by a voice from heaven, or Chriſt himſelf in perſon: "If they hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſuaded tho' one roſe from the dead."

St. Auſtin, in his Confeſſions, B. xii. cap. 26. delivers himſelf to this purpoſe: "If I had been enjoined by God to write the book of Geneſis, I ſhould have choſen to have compoſed it in ſuch a manner, for depth and eloquence, that they who did not underſtand creation, ſhould nevertheleſs not be able to reject it for being above their capacity; and that whatever different truths any man, or number of men, might diſcover, or have diſcovered to them, ſhould be contained in the conciſeneſs

ciſeneſs of the text." This ſhews a vaſt reach of thought in St. Auſtin, and opens to us an amazing extent of truth in ſcripture, and ſeems to have been his real opinion of the book of Geneſis.

The ſcripture is light and truth from God; a clue put into my hands by him, to guide me thro' the mazes of darkneſs and error, the inſtrument he works with in the deſtruction of ſin and purification of my nature; and if I do but receive it as ſuch, I am ſure he will bleſs it to me, in ſuch ways as he knows to be beſt for me. My only prayer to the Father of mercies and God of all conſolation is, that he would give me a full conviction and certain apprehenſion of my faith and ſincerity in the uſe of it; and all the reſt, the meaſure of illumination, ſenſible comforts, and worldly accommodations I leave cheerfully to him.

Some people lie at catch with ſcripture for examples or expreſſions to countenance their corruption.

The deſign of the Chriſtian religion is to change men's views, lives, and tempers. But how? By the ſuperior excellence of its precepts? By the weight of its exhortations, or the promiſe of its rewards?—No; but by convincing men of their wretched guilt, blindneſs, and impotence; by inculcating the neceſſity of remiſſion, ſupernatural light and aſſiſtance, and actually promiſing and conveying them. And if it does not prove its di-

vinity by its efficacy, let it be condemned as an impoſture. This was one of its moſt operative convincing proofs at the beginning, and certainly is its greateſt abiding proof.

The ſcripture ſends me to my heart; and my heart, well known and conſidered, ſends me back again to the ſcripture, with great advantage for the underſtanding of it.

It may be a dangerous ſnare to me, and I may go mourning all my life long, if I expect any thing from God that he has never promiſed.

Eve was ſadly miſtaken in Cain, when ſhe ſaid ſhe had gotten the man Jehovah, (the promiſed ſeed) and had got no better than a murderer. Perhaps this is a common conceit. And men think they have Chriſt, when they have nothing in them but the ſpirit of Cain.

If we had a voice from heaven, it would reveal no new ſcripture to us, it would ſend us to the law and the teſtimony; why then ſhould we not adhere to it, and make a diligent uſe of it without? We ſhould, if we believed it.

The religion of moſt men is fixed from nature; that is, worldly eaſe and convenience, before they come to the reading of the ſcripture. The conſequence is plain. In all points where it exceeds their ſtandard, it will be pared away.

With

With what a mixture of fear, reverence, and holy joy ſhould we open the bible! The book of truth and happineſs! God's heart opened to man! And yet the whole and every part of it ſecreted from him, and hid under an impenetrable veil, till he opens his heart to God.

Before the coming of Chriſt, the law and the goſpel were in one, but the latter ſo hid under the former that it was matter of ſome difficulty to diſcern it. After his coming the goſpel part of the law was taken out of it, and ſeparated from it, and by being placed apart, in a conſpicuous point of view, reflected back its own luſtre upon the law, diſcovered plainly that it was in it, and gave it a ſtrength and vigour which it never had before.

The wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with God; conſequently the wiſdom of God is fooliſhneſs with man. The conſequence of both is plain; all who adhere to divine wiſdom and illumination, muſt neceſſarily be fools in the eye of the world.

The ſcripture is unto us what the ſtar was to the wiſe men. But if we ſpend all our time in gazing upon it, obſerving its motions, and admiring its ſplendor, without being led to Chriſt by it, the uſe of it will be loſt to us.

Perhaps it may be a good rule in the reading of ſcripture, not to run from one paſſage to another, or ſuppoſe it a duty to read a certain portion

of it every day, but to dwell upon particular paſſages, till they have, in ſome meaſure, done their office.

Every one ſhould apply ſcripture to himſelf, as if it was written for him only.

Scripture-reading is a feaſt indeed, when we find in ourſelves a diſpoſition to receive it in truth and ſimplicity.

"Son of man, can theſe dry bones live? Lord God, thou knoweſt." Shew me a thought ſo intereſting, ſo profound, ſo impreſſive, and ſo well expreſſed in a Pagan author.

Poiſon ſecretly conveyed into an antidote muſt be fatal, becauſe no farther cure will be looked for. How many themſelves poiſon their great antidote the bible!

Look full at ſcripture, eſpecially the beatitudes; do not be afraid of it, it is a ſovereign cure for a ſick ſoul; but then it muſt not be adulterated, as it is, with the ſpurious mixtures of human reaſon.

We go to commentators for the moſt part, becauſe we are afraid to take Chriſt and his Apoſtles upon their own word. If we had a ſimple faith, we ſhould ſeldom want others to explain their meaning.

It

It is an awful, dreadful thing to come full into the light of ſcripture, and be upon a foot of ſincerity with God.

Our ſpiritual progreſs is greatly hindered by running from one thing to another. When any thought, diſcovery, or paſſage of ſcripture makes a ſtrong impreſſion, and, as it were, ſeizes upon the mind, conſider it as of God, and give it time and opportunity to work its effect, by excluding every thing elſe for a ſeaſon. It would be of infinite uſe to keep an exact hiſtory of ſuch inward workings; their riſe, continuance, declenſion, and revival; and the communication and compariſon of many ſuch hiſtories would not only afford matter of curious knowledge, great improvement, and mutual comfort, but, perhaps, be one of the ſtrongeſt evidences of Chriſt's miſſion and the truth of ſcripture.

The ſcriptures are ſo darkened with expoſitions, and buried under ſuch a heap of rubbiſh, that it is a kind of labour even for the Spirit of God to remove it. The minds of the poor, not being ſophiſticated by the falſe gloſſes which obſcure the plain ſenſe of ſcripture, are in a much better condition for underſtanding it than the learned.

It is no objection to the truth of ſcripture that ſo many different ſects find their own opinions in it: For, firſt, if they were all agreed in their ſenſe of it, and ſubmiſſion to it, the teſtimony it brings againſt the blindneſs and corruption of mankind would

would be weakened: Secondly, it is no diſparagement to a looking-glaſs that all ſee ſomething in, tho' it that is pleaſing to themſelves; the glaſs is true, the eye is partial.

It is ſaid of Socrates, that when he believed he was divinely admoniſhed to do any thing, it was impoſſible to make him take a contrary reſolution. How does his example ſhame thoſe who pretend to receive and believe the ſcripture as a divine direction, and yet for the moſt part trample it under their feet?

It is the great deſign of the ſcripture to teach the beſt to deſpair of being ſelf-ſaved; the worſt not to deſpair of being ſaved by Chriſt, and to offer to all the help they want.

The ſcripture was written to be tranſcribed into the heart, and it has its effect when the heart is in ſuch full conſent and agreement therewith, that the ſcripture might have been copied from it.

It is impoſſible in the nature of things that ſo burdenſome and expenſive an inſtitution as that of Moſes ſhould ever have been received by the Jews, but upon ſufficient evidence of its being divine. *See Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* Vol. II. c. I. p. 116.

The deſign of revelation is to inform mankind that they are in a ſtate of ruin, and under the divine diſpleaſure by reaſon of ſin, and to propoſe the

the means of their recovery to the favour of God and the hope of eternal life, by faith in a Redeemer, and ſubmiſſion to his teaching and authority.

Setting aſide St. Paul, I ſhould think Mr. Law right in his notion of regeneration; but when I look into the ſcripture I am ſure he is wrong.

Many aſſent to the truth of ſcripture, and make uſe of it to paint their faces, but will not ſuffer it to get within them, nor come too near the heart.

How can I be diſcontented or low-ſpirited, want employment or enjoyment, when I have the ſcripture to go to?

I have the writings of a moſt invaluable eſtate in my hands, made over to me as my own property; and whenever I open the New Teſtament, and think of the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, therein conveyed to every believer, I may look down with contempt on all earthly poſſeſſions, and deſerve to forfeit my intereſt in the Goſpel-treaſure if I do not.

There is but one kind of happineſs in nature for intelligent creatures, viz. that by which God is happy: God is happy in his own will; therefore intelligent creatures can only be happy by their knowledge of, and conformity to, that will. The queſtion, Where is this knowledge to be had? is eaſily anſwered; and the neceſſity of a revelation

revelation for this purpoſe, together with the helps it offers for bringing mankind to that conformity, appears at once.

CHAP. III.

GOD.

ALL ſpiritual happineſs is in God, and inſeparable from him, and there is no poſſibility of the creature's receiving any but by being in him. The goſpel only teaches the neceſſity of this union, and the precious means and myſtery of it by Chriſt.

The mercy of God is the firſt article of every man's creed; but the different manner of underſtanding and applying it makes an eſſential, infinite difference in the characters of men, and conſtitutes either religion or atheiſm.

I believe the univerſal, immediate preſence of God; that he is the foundation, life, and eſſence of all creation, and of every part and particle of it; or, in St. Paul's words, that he is above all, and through all, and in all; but ſtill he is abſent, and infinitely removed from me, unleſs I find him in my own heart. The greateſt knowledge of his being and attributes will avail me nothing, if I do not alſo know him as my Father in Chriſt; and, as ſuch, favouring, loving, and bleſſing me, in time and to all eternity.

I do not think it is in the power of God to make any thing to be our happineſs but himſelf.

The mercies of God refuſed, aggravate guilt, and draw on great ruin; but what then? Muſt not God therefore make a tender of his mercy? and muſt none be the better for it, becauſe ſome will be the worſe?

Nothing but love can unite with and enjoy love. The nature of God muſt be in us before it can be a good to us.

All glory is ſo properly and ſolely God's, that none can belong to any other; and whatever creature, man or angel, takes any to itſelf, in ſo doing diſcovers the nature, and falls into the condemnation, of the devil.

What do I aſk of God? Happineſs confuſedly, or himſelf as the only ground of it?

No rational creature can be truly happy in the enjoyment of any thing, ſo long as there is any thing better to be enjoyed. This thought, if true, leads directly to God.

The will of God is God; and to love one without the other is impoſſible.

If we look only at our fellow-creatures, we ſhall find, or take, but too many occaſions of pride and ſelf-exaltation.

The way to be humble is to look upwards to God. If we think greatly of his majeſty, purity, and infinity of all excellence, it will give us ſuch a ſtriking view of our vileneſs and abſolute unworthineſs, that we ſhall think it hardly poſſible for any to be lower than ourſelves.

The angels are ſwallowed up in the will of God, as their centre of reſt and full enjoyment, and have not one thought out of or beyond it. If they ſhould give their wills unto any thing elſe, but for a moment, they would loſe their name, nature, and happineſs.

Though God reveals his own character in his word, he reſerves to himſelf the revelation of it to us by his word. Whenever he diſcovers himſelf effectually and ſavingly, the heart knows it is he and not the mere word that hath done it.

I long to know more of that Being who made the world, and to whom I have ſo many obligations.

It is eaſy to ſay, Bleſſed be God in every thing; but where is the man that is always pleaſed with God?

How happy ſhould we be, if we loved God but a little.

There is no poſſibility of happineſs but in the will of God, and in the diſcovery of it as his goodneſs

goodneſs to mankind, and the only way in which he can communicate it.

"God and enough," ſays B. The reaſon why we never have enough, or know not what we would have, is becauſe we neither have, nor deſire to have God.

If we had ſelf-power, or could be ſelf-ſaved, we ſhould be gods to ourſelves; and therefore God, for his own glory, and to preſerve us from this curſed idolatry, keeps all power in his own hands.

With us commonly, ſin is no ſooner paſt than forgotten. To God it is alike preſent at all times, and he always ſees us in the very act of what we did fifty years ago.

Thoſe who do not chooſe to be like God, will certainly make God like themſelves, as regardleſs of ſin, and as little concerned to puniſh it as they think he ſhould be.

God has made the only thing which conſtitutes our happineſs, reſignation to and love of his will, common to all.

"Forgive me all my ſin:"—An unreaſonable and ſhameful petition to any but God; for tho' all ſin is infinitely aggravated by being againſt God, yet the only hope of ſinners is, that it is againſt God.

We diſhonour God greatly, and deny his nature, by not expecting great things from him.

God keeps us from much evil by the ſecret methods of his providence, or prudential conſiderations, reſpecting our worldly intereſts or convenience, while in us there is no ſanctification.

God ſometimes ſuffers the temptation to be very great, as in the caſe of Adam and Eve, and the Prophet, 1 Kings xiii. but his command is ſacred, and the conſequence of breaking it is terrible.

God's puniſhments and favours, tho' delayed, are as certain in his own time and manner, as his eternal unchangeable juſtice and goodneſs.

The higheſt angels know that they are kept in being, and ſupported every moment in their ſtate of rectitude by the will and power of God; and this ſenſe of their dependence is their glory, perfection, happineſs, ſong of praiſe, and the ground of their love and adoration.

God manifeſts himſelf in all his works, benefits, and bleſſings, and hides himſelf again in his providential croſſes and afflictions, and the pains and ſorrows of life. All is juſt as it ſhould be; he tells us as plainly that we were not made for a happineſs in this world, as he does that he made and governs it.

It is hard to ſay whether God manifeſts or hides himſelf more.

If

If God would give me all in heaven and earth, without himſelf, I ſhould be extremely and for ever miſerable.

I am bound to thank God for my being; for the continuance and ſupport of my life; and for innumerable benefits reſpecting this world; but moſt of all for making me capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him; calling me to this happineſs, and qualifying me for it.

God is my maker, preſerver, redeemer, ſanctifier: Do I delight to conſider him under theſe characters?

If I was to be aſſured that there is no God, or that he does not govern the world, nor regard what is doing in it; nor hear prayer, nor promiſe immortality and prepare us for it, how would it affect me? Should I think myſelf undone, as being deprived of all my hope and comfort; my beſt friend, and the deareſt object of my heart?

God is my end, Chriſt is my way, the Spirit my guide.

God has the ſame knowledge, inſpection, and care of every one as if there was but one.

It is my duty to keep myſelf at an awful diſtance from God's natural attributes, and to approach as near as poſſible to his moral.

God

God gives his help, not by forcing, but ſecretly inclining and changing the will, and bringing it with freedom and full conſent to a conformity with his own.

If I pleaſed God, I am ſure he would pleaſe me.

I ſhall be an happy man when I cannot pleaſe myſelf without pleaſing God.

He is God to govern his own world and not I.

What God commands or ordains is both the work and enjoyment of the day.

God is happy in his own will, and makes it known to us that we may be happy in it too.

If I am not happy in the will of God, I can be happy in nothing elſe; I ſhall be emphatically curſed with my own.

Inſtead of ſtretching our thoughts to the myſtery of creation, and ſoaring above the ſtars, when we think of God, which for the moſt part is ſetting him at a diſtance from us, it may be of great uſe to conſider him as preſent in the room or little ſpot where we are, and as it were circumſcribed within it, in all his glory, majeſty, and purity.

I need not envy any man his ſtation, or wiſh for a better ſpot of earth than where I am to find God in; he is found only in the heart, and in the heart every where, and wherever he is found he makes a paradiſe.

It is the will of God that we ſhould put him upon doing moral impoſſibilities, and till we do, we neither know God nor ourſelves. Men judge of us by our actions, God by our motives.

How can we complain or think hardly of God for any thing he does, or have the leaſt doubt of his goodneſs, when he has given his Son to die for us!

God is no where to me, if he is not in my heart.

God denies us nothing but with a deſign to give us ſomething better. If he forbids a luſt, it is to give himſelf. O wretched man! that ever the heart ſhould be ſo blind, ſo hard, ſo long in chooſing!

My greateſt obligation to God, next to the gift of Jeſus Chriſt and his Spirit, is for commanding me to love him with all the heart, &c.

Thank God for his reſtraint; thank God for laying it on the heart; thank God for the goſpel-motives and help to do his will.

Certainly

Certainly God had ſome further deſign in giving me my life, and preſerving it by continual miracles, within and without, than that I ſhould eat, drink, and die.

If I could help myſelf, I ſhould chooſe to have God do it. What leſs can be a ground of truſt, dread, love?

What is rebellion in the ſtate to rebellion againſt God?

We ourſelves ſtint God in the meaſure of ſpiritual gifts. He has no meaſure.

I have always known that my happineſs is in God's power, but I did not conſider enough that he himſelf is that happineſs.

God takes the ſame care of me, and I ought to have the ſame regard to him, as if there was no other being in nature but him and myſelf.

He who ſends the ſtorm ſteers the veſſel.

All creation, and every part of it, is, more or leſs, (and, perhaps, originally more than now) a copy or reſemblance of God; a manifeſtation of his nature and operations; the inſtrument of his goodneſs; executioner of his juſtice; or a monitor of man's duty. The degenerate creature, man, in his preſent capability of the divine likeneſs; the ſeveral tribes of brutes, in their formation, qualities, acts, and inſtincts; the

the inanimate parts of the creation, in their attractions, proceſſes, and offices; all are ſomething, and ſpeak ſomething of God, in the univerſal language of nature. The ſun, for inſtance, to ſay nothing of its nature as fire, is a lively emblem of God's univerſal operative preſence: And our Saviour's ſaying, "how often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," is an affecting illuſtration of the divine στοργη, and his own yearning compaſſion, in the fond workings of that creature. But who, in this dark ſtate of things, can trace the thought in its full extent, or diſcover the reſemblance, ends, and uſes of but a few particulars? This will be the delightful employment of glorified Spirits, and the growing wonder of eternity.

How is it poſſible for God to make an intelligent creature to receive its happineſs from any thing but himſelf? Since this would not only be the giving his glory to another, but in ſome ſort an annihilation of himſelf. For whatever conſtitutes or confers our happineſs, will, in the reaſon of the thing, be our God. And we cannot be perſuaded to place our deſires, or pay our homage any where elſe.

God offers himſelf in Chriſt to be our portion, poſſeſſion, and happineſs. And the man who can be contented with any thing leſs, is neither worthy to receive him, nor qualified to enjoy him.

When I conſider the God who fills heaven and earth as intimately preſent with, and, as it were, circumſcribed within my heart, I am ſeized with dread and aſtoniſhment. I dare not lie to him, nor prevaricate with him; I am afraid to ſpeak, or even almoſt to think before him.

It is better to believe the goodneſs of God, notwithſtanding the untowardneſs of ſome appearances in the ſtate and nature of man, than to deny thoſe appearances to be what they are, upon a ſuppoſition that they are not to be reconciled with the goodneſs of God.

CHAP. IV.

HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

WHO is there almoſt that does not wiſh God was leſs pure in his nature, leſs ſtrict in his commands, leſs exact in his juſtice, leſs terrible in his vengeance, than he is? And is not this wiſhing that he was what he is not, and diſliking what he is? And what is this, if the ſoul durſt ſpeak out the horrid truth, but even hating God?

Nothing in nature is more unknown to man than himſelf.

There are few men upon earth, ſo deſpiſed, diſregarded, and forgotten, as God is by the generality of men. "The peace of God paſſeth all underſtanding."

underſtanding." And yet when a few ſimple ſouls ſtand out, declaring boldly that they have it, but cannot explain it, all the reſt of the world cries out upon them for fools and enthuſiaſts.

It is the common opinion with regard to natural evil, that it is ſufficiently accounted for, if happineſs prevails upon the whole: That this mixed ſtate of things is unavoidable, and therefore no impeachment to the goodneſs of God; and that no man, or number of men, however miſerable, have any right to complain, if happineſs is the reſult of the general ſyſtem. I do not underſtand this; it ſeems to me little leſs than blaſphemy. How is it poſſible for ſo much as one conſcious being to be miſerable, but by its own fault?

If man is a ſinner, why does he not believe it? And if he is not, why does he confeſs it? What a ſtrange jumble of blindneſs and hypocriſy! We confeſs what we do not really believe, and yet really are what we confeſs.

We aggravate the faults of others to have a pretence for hating or deſpiſing them, and for the pleaſure of ſelf-compariſon.

Striving againſt nature is like holding a weather-cock with one's hand; as ſoon as the force is taken off it veers again with the wind.

Whoever thinks he can acquit himſelf to God, has wrong notions of God, of himſelf, of duty, of ſin. Either he conſiders God only under the ſingle idea of mercy, or he knows nothing of his own great corruption, or contracts duty into a narrow compaſs, or fixes the guilt of ſin at a low rate.

The happieſt and moſt envied life, taken from childhood to old age, will not bear a review. There is not a year, perhaps not a month, perhaps not an hour of it, which a wiſe man would chooſe to live over again.

All our happineſs, as mere men, conſiſts in forgetting ourſelves: if we think we are miſerable.

A conſcious reflecting being, eagerly coveting happineſs, and ſeeking it every where but in God, is the monſter of the univerſe. God could no more make ſuch a creature, than he can unmake himſelf.

We are as vain as if we were in full poſſeſſion of our original perfection; and our being vain is a certain proof that we are not.

An impatient deſire to know, and have more than is proper for us in our preſent ſtate, often hinders us from uſing what we have, and knowing what we might; and is to many a ſource of great deluſion.

The

The heart of man pants everlaſtingly after diſtinction; and our pride only changes its appearance. Mine, I find, is grown to a goodly ſize under the ſhew of humility.

God may ſay to every ſelf-righteous man, as he did in the caſe of Sodom, ſhew me ten; yea, one perfect good action, and for the ſake of it I will not deſtroy.

The ſour fruit that Adam eat will be ever and anon riſing upon our ſtomachs, even in our beſt eſtate.

So long as we think we are what we are not, and have what we have not, we can receive nothing at the hands of God; and reformation is impoſſible.

We can no more bear to be told of our faults by God than man; and if we durſt think it, are in reality as much diſguſted at the one as the other.

What is the reaſon of the frequent uneaſineſs betwixt man and wife; and of their ſometimes giving full ſcope to their paſſions upon very trifling occaſions? Even amongſt perſons who behave with decency, calmneſs, and general good temper to all others? It is becauſe they think their reputation ſafe in each other's hands, and therefore are not afraid to diſcover their natural ſourneſs and malignity. This ſhews that neither love of rectitude or the fear of God is at the bottom

tom of that poor thing we call virtue. Since we exert it leaſt where it is moſt due, and where it would be moſt ſerviceable to ourſelves, only becauſe we think we can do ſo without diſgrace.

The boaſted demonſtration of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, from the unequal diſtribution of things in this life, is annihilated upon the Chriſtian ſcheme; which ſuppoſes all to be ſinners, and as ſuch liable to condemnation; and, therefore, whatever good we receive from God in any period of our exiſtence, is grace, and not retribution.

Charity does not oblige us to think any man good, becauſe Chriſt ſays "there is none good."

Obſerve man's depravity in his puniſhment. In our preſent condition we can only reliſh earthly things, and they all conſpire to diſappoint our expectations. There muſt therefore of neceſſity be a change both in the faculty and the object, if ever we be happy. And our buſineſs here is not to accumulate riches, or fly from the ſight of ourſelves to amuſements; but to acquire a true taſte for things that are excellent.

Words cannot expreſs the tormenting conſciouſneſs of a ſoul ſeparated from the gracious influxes of God, and abandoned for ever to its own poverty and impotence.

If we ſought after truth, out of pure love to it, and for the pleaſure of it, as is pretended, we ſhould not fear the great teacher, Death, as we do.

Nothing ſhews the vanity of wealth, grandeur, and pleaſure in ſo ſtrong a light as the reſtleſs ambitious ſpirit of princes. What do they want? and what would they have? Alas, the ſoul, conſcious to itſelf of much higher pretenſions, is not to be quieted with any thing theſe can give it.

It is the devil's maſter-piece to make us think well of ourſelves.

Alas! who is humble? We diſclaim perfection, and run down the preachers of it, from a general confuſed conſciouſneſs of our unworthineſs, but cannot bear to be told of a trifling error in conduct. What management, gentle inſinuation, and nice art of addreſs, is neceſſary to prevent reſentment in ſuch caſes, even from a friend?

We are ſinners by the corruption of the heart; and it is a fatal miſtake to ſuppoſe that we are ſo only by the commiſſion of ſin. Our guilt does not then begin to exiſt, when it is brought into action, but to appear; and what was always manifeſt to God, is now become ſo to ourſelves and others.

We cannot go to the bottom of ſin without the convincing, ſearching Spirit of God. If the work is to be our own, we ſhall deal ſo very tenderly with ourſelves, that nothing can ever come of it.

It

It is ſaid that riches, power, and diſtinction are apt to corrupt the heart. The truth is, they find it corrupt; and all they do is, to ſet men at liberty to act according to their nature, and thus add to the ſtrength of it. But are not many humble, orderly, well diſpoſed in a low eſtate, and inſolent, and inſufferable in proſperity? They might be hypocrites in a low eſtate, and conceal their paſſions and tempers for various cauſes, but they never were humble or well diſpoſed.

It would be a ſad thing to think that we ſhall never be better than we are, or can make ourſelves.

All men are naturally in a ſtate of hoſtility with ſome, and ready upon occaſion to be ſo with all, or any, wife or child not excepted.

The paſſions do not always torment us, we could not bear it; but then the malignity of them is rooted in the conſtitution, though it does not always appear. As perſons ſubject to fits have the cauſe lurking within, though they have them not every day.

When we open ourſelves to others, it is partially and hypocritically, with prevarication and great tenderneſs to ourſelves, and with deſign to be admired and flattered by them, rather than counſelled and convinced. Alas, we do ſo to God more than we are aware of.

Man

Man is ever at odds with God about the condition of his acceptance. He fancies he has ſome reſources in himſelf, ſome worthineſs of his own, that, with a few grains of allowance, will bear him out, and rejects the aids of the goſpel. But the ſcripture is peremptory: He has none: "Without me ye can do nothing."

After the commiſſion of ſin, or any eruption of our inbred malignity, we quickly heal ourſelves again, and reinſtate ourſelves in our own good opinion. How much better would it be to let our nature appear in its frightful nakedneſs, and to conſider that the curſed root of all ſtill remains, and that, if not here deſtroyed, in another world it can produce nothing but eſſential, uninterrupted miſery, when we have no longer the joys and comforts, cares and amuſements of this life to keep off the ſight of ourſelves.

If I bring my pride with me to the work of God, it will feed as ſweetly upon it as upon any other diſtinction, and in the end fatally blaſt it.

We know we ſhould be good, and therefore conclude at once that we are ſo; eſpecially if we can read, and abound with notions. Our pride aſks for no proofs.

Our being in this world, given up to fleſh and blood, is our fall. From the beginning it was not ſo. God and his angels ſee us where we are with pity and concern. But man is poſitive that

his preſent being, circumſtanced as it is, was his original ſtate; reſolves to make the moſt of it; is almoſt equally fond of it, whether he laughs or howls out his time; never profits by his own or other men's perpetual diſappointments; and, in conſequence of his miſtake, dies worſe than a brute.

Man has the worſt qualities of brutes, without their beſt.

The obſervations I make upon the pride and corruption of my nature, inſtead of humbling me, only give me a handle to value myſelf upon my penetration.

It is to be feared that a ſecret wiſh to be ſaved without holineſs, is the great bar to our progreſs towards perfection.

Moſt men's notion of ſin is only this, That whatever it is, they themſelves are not guilty of it. None are ſo abſurd as to think that they do all they ſhould do; or that they are guilty of no deviations from the rule of right. But that their ſtate is ſinful upon the whole, or that ſin is damnable, they do believe.

Our pride, as delicate as it is, can be content to feed upon that ſtench and corruption, which a little humility makes us nauſeate.

The character of man is, proud ſinner.

A creature made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God, and yet ignorant of him, and turned from him, or, which is all one, not turned to him in the bent of its will, desire, and affections, must necessarily be in a fallen state, and perverted from the end of its creation.

I do not want humanity, or social virtue. I can be honest and civil, and observe the law of kindness in my actions. But who shall give me humility, meekness, patience, inward purity, and the love of God?

Men do not want the devil now to tempt them into a belief, that they shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil; they are but too well persuaded of their own ability.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" is a trying question, when it comes to be well considered.

If I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep.

What can shew man's horrid corruption in a stronger light, than that war should be lawful (if it be lawful) to prevent greater mischiefs?

All the difference between sin latent and breaking out into act, is, that man now sees what God saw before. And our compunction is generally for the discovery of it. We can feel sin in ourselves for years, and know that God sees it, with very little concern. It

It is no uncommon inſtance of the deceitfulneſs of the heart, for men to venture upon the general contempt by becoming religious, and at the ſame time make all up to themſelves by their own eſteem, or the good opinion of a few. But to be univerſally deſpiſed, and to know certainly, by an inward feeling not to be evaded, that we deſerve it!!!

The appearance of religion only on Sundays, proves that it is only an appearance.

It is not the leaſt innocent kind of ambition to ſeek after praiſe in the way of religious uſefulneſs.

Never a day paſſes but the devil offers his ſervice.

Mankind are perpetually at variance, by being all of one ſect, viz. ſelfiſts.

We are undone by diſtinguiſhing time from eternity, and carrying on a ſeparate intereſt for it. There are few who do not diſobey God in the capital inſtance ordained for their trial. The obedience we compliment him with, generally ſpeaking, coſts us nothing.

Our ſtate, and being in this world, is our fall, and the loſs of our paradiſe; and we may as well ſeek it in hell, as here.

Who

Who can value money at a higher rate, or pay dearer for it, than the man who gets and keeps it in oppoſition to the light of conſcience?

Human nature is like a bad clock. It may go right now and then, or be made to ſtrike the hour, but its inward frame is to go wrong.

Our natural proneneſs to reſentment, hatred, malice, never fails to ſhew itſelf upon what we call a proper occaſion; that is, when we can make a ſhift to flatter ourſelves that we ſhall have the world on our ſide, and never more (O ſhame!) than in the cauſe of God and religion. The misfortune is in thinking that there ever can be any ſuch occaſion, and that we ſhould ever think ſo, is ſufficient proof of our corruption and unfitneſs by nature for our proper happineſs.

It is ſtrange we ſhould not ſee the folly of putting ourſelves in the power of others, for much the greateſt part of our happineſs; tho' we cannot help knowing that naturally they are more diſpoſed to counteract it, and want to be pleaſed and humoured themſelves as much as we do.

Certainly, in a general way, the beſt are only what any one may be, and all prudent perſons at all times would be, if Chriſt had never come into the world.

Where is man's boaſted rectitude, when he neither knows what it is, nor will accept of it when he does?

Flying

Flying with horror from the thought that we are unfit to die, if God ſhould take us this day and hour out of the world, keeps off the diſcovery of our true ſtate more than any thing elſe, and fatally hinders our preparation for it.

We are often ſo much concerned about the appearace of happineſs, as never to caſt one thought toward the reality of it.

Human virtue works no cure, gives no peace.

We would be happy in ſpite of God and nature, in failure of duty, and with nothing about us but the grounds of miſery.

If a man would know himſelf truly, let him conſider what he is, and how he behaves where he has power; that is, where he thinks himſelf leaſt obliged to diſſemble.

When we ſee and judge rightly of the guilt and malignity of ſin, ſtill it is with a great reſerve of tenderneſs for ourſelves, and we chiefly mean the ſin of others; thus, inſtead of reforming, every one excuſes one.

Reformation is the object we pretend to aim at, but we are perpetually miſtaking the ſubject of it, it is ourſelves.

It is dreadful, but, perhaps, not uncommon ſelf-deceit, to preſent ourſelves before God with

a lie in our mouths, and hypocriſy in the heart, or a ſecret unwillingneſs to be and do as we pray.

Where almoſt is the man who does all he can, and all that Chriſt demands of him! It would fill the moſt pious ſoul with ſhame and confuſion to be upbraided by him for what it might have done!

What ado there is to work up the heart to any liking of God? The reaſon is, we begin it of ourſelves, and think to do it in our own ſtrength; whereas it can only be done in faith and the Spirit's power.

We are ruined by fancying we are what we know or read, or that we can make ourſelves ſo in the turn of a thought; or if we do ſee and own a defect, yet thinking tenderly of ourſelves when we are chargeable with horrid depravity, and abſolutely unfit for God.

Man's holineſs: Much ado about nothing. If you would have a good opinion of your heart, keep the Holy Ghoſt out of it.

Every one may have obſerved that in paroxyſms of paſſion, or ill humour, the judgment is abſolutely diſabled; we are incapable of reaſoning; keenly in the wrong, and very poſitive. It is not uncommon for perſons to be thus blind in cold blood, and ſome all their lives.

Reaſon never diſcerns itſelf, or any thing elſe truly, till it ſees its own impotence.

Some

Some will mortify themſelves in many things, and do almoſt every thing in religion but one; unfortunately, that one is the teſt of their obedience, and the very thing required of them.

Let this be ever uppermoſt in my thoughts, and the great rule of my converſing with all, that we are immortal beings in the firſt ſtage of our exiſtence, full of miſtakes; or unconcerned about the matter, and yet dreadfully concerned in the iſſue.

Senſe of an irretrievable error in life, faſtening upon the mind, is a foretaſte of hell.

We may find out the ſelfiſh ſtubbornneſs of our wills, unmortified deſires, and earthly bent, in ſmall croſſes when we do not in greater. Great croſſes ſeem to furniſh ſome excuſe for complaint, and nature is more pitied than blamed for ſinking under them; but ſmall ones, fretting and galling us, afford no refuge againſt conviction.

Deſpair is the growth of pride and not of humility. Why are we overwhelmed with doubts and fears? Becauſe we are unworthy. Is it not plain, therefore, that we look for a worthineſs in ourſelves which we neither have nor ever ſhall?

Why are we more alarmed and concerned at breaches of duty to man than God, but becauſe they are ſeen and obſerved? And what then is our principle of action?

When

When men love and admire us, we think it is for ſome merit in ourſelves, and from a natural working of pride can love them again. It is for the ſame reaſon that we love God ſo little, notwithſtanding his ſuperabundant goodneſs to us in Chriſt, becauſe it lays us low, ſtrips us of all excellence, and can only be received in a deep ſenſe of our own unworthineſs.

We are often more aſhamed than grieved and humbled for our ſins. Our own conſciouſneſs of them, and of God's being privy to them, does not pain us near ſo much as it would to have them known to others: See, therefore, whether what you call your penitence is not more pride than any thing elſe.

Why does the preſent hour come loaded with diſguſt, and lie heavy upon our hands, but becauſe we know not what to do in it, or reſolve to do any thing but what we ſhould?

Not one in a thouſand forms his plan of life and purſues it ſteadily from principle and regard to the will of God; if we did, there would hardly be an unhappy man in the world.

"God be merciful to me a ſinner," ſaid the Publican. If I was to hear you wiſhing to be the man I ſhould hope well of your caſe; if you ſay you are, it is a hundred to one you are miſtaken.

If you would know what your root is, conſider how your virtues are in exerciſe towards God. You abhor the imputation of ingratitude; the meaning is, you would not have the world think that you are ungrateful: For, perhaps, you have not one ſpark of gratitude to your great Benefactor, your God and Father. You would not be falſe to the marriage-bed; but where is your fidelity to Jeſus, the Lord and Huſband of every Chriſtian? And as to the point of juſtice, a moſt ſacred virtue, and very high in your eſteem; why muſt every creature have its due from you, and not God; and why do you think ſo little of what is his due? You honour the command of a man like yourſelf; but why are ſo many of his ſlighted?

Learned men, and enquirers into nature, are bent upon knowing a great deal in this world, where we can hardly know any thing, and too often neglect the means of knowing every thing in another.

Wretched mankind! who, in your natural ſtate, can only be happy in oppoſition to the will of God.

Every natural man's aim, in all he ſays and does, is firſt to gain his own good opinion, and then to appear better to others than he does to himſelf. The ſcripture doctrine of the fall, and univerſal depravity of mankind, though not denied, has but little effect, becauſe every man has a good opinion of one, and ſees corruption only in others.

It is a full vindication of Providence that every man may chooſe God for his friend and portion, if he pleaſes; and that ſo few do, is a full proof of the blindneſs, corruption, and degeneracy of mankind.

It is the great diſpute of the world, and of every man naturally with himſelf, whether happineſs conſiſts in the commiſſion or forbearance of ſin; and moſt of thoſe who declare for the latter contradict themſelves by their courſes.

No one can boaſt of what he does, or ever think of bringing it to account, who conſiders what he does not do.

Not to ſin, may be a bitter croſs; to ſin, is hell.

In reſpect of ſin, I am where the plague is, ſee many ſick of it, and in continual danger myſelf.

If we were happy, ſleep would be ſubmitted to with great reluctance; as we are not, it is a greater benefit than we are aware of, to be obliged to paſs a great part of our time in a ſtate of inſenſibility.

A wrathful, paſſionate man is as mount Veſuvius, hollow, and ſtored with combuſtible matter, which is every now and then breaking out to the terror and anguiſh of all about him.

God can ſave us only by his own power, for his glory, merely in a way of grace and favour, ſolely by Chriſt, to the end we may love, adore, and praiſe him; and yet the wiſh and will of man, notwithſtanding the peculiar diſcoveries of the Chriſtian religion, and the fulleſt conviction of infinite defect, is to be independent and ſelf-ſaved.

I would gladly believe that the nature of mankind is not ſo bad as mine; and yet when I obſerve the defects of the beſt of men, I find there is but little ground for any ſuch hope.

One great miſtake of the world, and the greateſt bar to the happineſs and well-being of mankind, rich and poor, is thinking that all the money we are poſſeſſed of is our own.

Perhaps many who think themſelves high in Chriſt's ſchool have not yet begun with his A, B, C.

I fear nothing ſo much, and there is nothing I have ſo much reaſon to fear, as myſelf.

If ſin had not brought death into the world, and Chriſt to the croſs, we ſhould never have known ſo much of the goodneſs of God as we do.

Sinning is ſo much a nature, and ſo cloſe wrought into the conſtitution of man, that I can ſcarcely form a conception of exiſtence without it.

I can no more root out the evil qualities of my ſoul by any volition, reſolution, or efforts of my own, than I can think the ſtone out of my body.

Oh! that I longed for the time of perfect deliverance both of ſoul and body.

O that ſigh! Do happy people ever ſigh? I find I want ſomething which God will not ſuffer me to have; and till we are of the ſame mind, life can be nothing at bottom but one perpetual ſigh.

We can take reproof patiently from a book, but not from a tongue. The book hurts not our pride, the living reprover does; and we cannot bear to have our faults ſeen by others.

We confeſs our emptineſs to God in very ſtrong terms; and when we have done praying, are apt to depend altogether upon ourſelves.

It is a vain and impious thought, to imagine that I can do any thing by my own ſtrength. Dependence on God, in every ſingle act of thinking and willing, is both my duty and ſecurity.

It may juſtly be queſtioned whether ſelf-power can be communicated to a creature.

It is much eaſier to join one's ſelf to a ſect than to God.

The ſoul is naturally frightened and ſhrinks from the thought of living only upon God and to God.

Submitting to the Spirit's operation, is like being laid naked upon a table to be cut for the ſtone. Mortification carries death to the enemy of it, and is a ſtab at the heart. Nature's concluſion is, "therefore not to-day."

It is a ſore trial to the ſoul, which knows any thing of itſelf, to come cloſe up to God; He is light and truth, all love and purity; the ſoul dark, ſelfiſh, and ſin-polluted.

The reaſon why we ſhould draw nigh to God, and keep up a continual intercourſe with him, is the reaſon why we do not; we want his light and help, and this want is the very thing which makes us averſe to him, and keeps us from him.

Man would be intolerable to himſelf, and look out every way for help, if it was not for his pride.

There is in the heart of man a deep-rooted covetouſneſs; a ſubtle worldly ſpirit, ſuggeſting diabolical, murderous thoughts for its own ends.

If God did not take us to himſelf, few would go to him of their own accord.

"Why calleſt thou me good?" O man! why calleſt thou thyſelf good?

We

We ſee and know enough of ourſelves, to dread the thought of being ſeen and known by others; and knowing that God ſees us, and looking on ourſelves without pain, ſelf-condemnation, or one mortifying reflection, is a fatal ſymptom, and full proof of our ſpiritual deadneſs.

We get a glimpſe of true wiſdom, and know how we ſhould live, perhaps an hour before we die.

If we venture our happineſs upon any thing beſides the peace of God and a good conſcience, we ſhall as certainly be unhappy as that every thing in the world is uncertain.

Parting with ſin is harder than parting with my wife—ſhe was bone of my bone, and fleſh of my fleſh; ſin is in the bone and in the fleſh, and twiſted about every fibre of the heart.

Religious truths, and religious employments, are not ſo much our choice for the ſake of their own excellence, as a force upon nature, and what we fly to as ſome kind of relief from the vanity and inſufficiency of every thing elſe.

If we might be eaſy and ſatisfied in and from the world, perhaps we ſhould look no where elſe for happineſs.

Though nature is dying, and as to the ſtrength and vigour of it almoſt gone, corruption is ſtrong

as

as ever; and herein is full proof that it does not die with the body.

To unregenerate men it is leſs painful to ſuffer than to do the will of God.

It is juſtly ſaid that ſin muſt be hated and abhorred for its own ſake, apart from conſequences; but who almoſt would not ſin, in one reſpect or other, if they were equally ſure of heaven, ſin or not?

The more I attempt to murder time, the more life it has to murder me, ſoul and body: If I put time in my pocket, it is no excuſe to ſay that I do not carry it to the play-houſe.

Time waits upon the ſoul early every morning, and ſays, What wilt thou have me to do to-day? It is a ſhame to ſay what the anſwer is, but will one day be known.

I would willingly go to Siberia for the remainder of my life, if I could leave myſelf behind me.

The ſoul is not ſelf-ſufficient, cannot be independent, muſt have ſome prop; unhappily it chooſes ſuch as ſhrink from under it.

We do not ſet the mark of holineſs high enough; we do not raiſe our deſire up to the ſcripture ſtandard of it; we do not truſt and pray enough.

What

What ſhould I be, if I had talents to be proud of, when I am ſo proud of nothing?

I cannot take the dimenſions of Chriſt's love, without a proper knowledge of my own ſin.

Strictly ſpeaking, there is no difference of characters with God, in point of real excellence and exact conformity to his law.

Sin keeps no Sabbaths.

The folly of irreligion is either deſiring that laſt which we moſt want, or preſuming that we can do every thing for ourſelves, and ſo never applying to God.

A full ſight of the corruption of human nature, if we exempt ourſelves from it in whole or in part, will certainly be followed with a ſplenetic contempt of others, approaching to miſanthropy.

The deformity of preſent ſin is hidden, or very much leſſened by its concomitant pleaſure; paſt ſin, the pleaſure of it being gone, appears to be what it is.

God's pity will hold me up and carry me thro'; my own, with all the reaſon I can put to it, and all the efforts I can make, is nothing.

How ſad, during life, to have conſcience only a tormentor.

My corruption is ſtrong, and bondage to ſin evident, when I am ſo long in making what I know to be a right and neceſſary choice.

I ſee my ſin in every perſon I meet.

If the heart is not filled with a pure love, by a divine change, its nature is corruption, and it can be nothing but a ſink of iniquity, whatever diſguiſes it may put on to deceive both the world and itſelf.

It would be great ſelf-ignorance and preſumption in me to ſay, I will not ſin to-day.

Men love only thoſe who love them, hardly any without a view to ſome advantage of their own, and never thoſe who are enemies, or thwart their intereſt and inclinations: God loves man purely and diſintereſtedly, notwithſtanding his vileneſs, averſion, and enmity to him.

People never tell more lies than in their prayers.

I ſhould not have had the ſtone in my bladder or kidneys, or both, if I had not firſt had a ſtone in my heart.

Sinning is putting poiſon into the ſting of death.

The great dependence thro' life, with moſt men, is on to-morrow, and to-morrow is ſtill before, while it never will be overtaken.

If

It is the hardeſt thing in the world to call out in earneſt for help againſt one's ſelf, and yet all depends upon it.

Though I have uſed myſelf to think meanly of the human heart, and have great reaſon ſo to do from the knowledge I have of my own, yet I am ſenſible that it is an unknown depth.

We never turn to God as our centre of reſt, ſupreme delight, and ſovereign good, till we have tried every thing elſe.

Gataker, ſuppoſing that the practice of Marcus Antoninus was conformed to his ſentiments, confeſſes with ſhame how far he came ſhort of ſo great a pattern: But this very thing ſhews the ſuperior excellence of the Chriſtian; no Heathen philoſopher ever made ſuch a confeſſion. With all their knowledge they did not know themſelves.

It is a real, but moſt horrible truth, that the bulk of mankind are not in charity with God.

It is wonderful to conſider how naturally we all lean to the law for ſalvation, without obſerving that we are as naturally averſe to the practice of it as to lean to it, and that it is impoſſible to anſwer its demands.

If I could do for myſelf what I aſk of God, I ſhould be a God to myſelf; I ſhould have little dependence upon or regard to the God who made

heaven and earth; I ſhould hardly believe there is ſuch a God.

Sin, by a natural right, demands execution of its curſe at God's hands.

One reaſon why the world is not reformed is, becauſe every man would have others make a beginning, and never thinks of himſelf.

If I was to think daily and hourly, and think of nothing elſe for a thouſand years but how to cleanſe my heart, or root one vice out of it in my own ſtrength, I ſhould be no nearer to it at the end than I was at the beginning.

There may be horrid pride in confeſſing and aggravating our ſins: — "That ever I ſhould do this!"—Why, who are you? Do you not ſee that you are making yourſelf ſomebody with God?

Inſtead of making religious exerciſes a ſtep of approach to God, ſeeking God by them, and preſſing to God through them, there is danger of making them a pretence for keeping ourſelves from him, and a means of quieting conſcience without him.

It is a great point of religion to know the heart.—I ſee but a very ſmall part of its deceit, hypocriſy, and deſperate wickedneſs.

We have commonly one maſter ſin, and are ſo blinded with it, as not to ſee others as great, and more dangerous becauſe they are hidden.

With what reluctance ſhould we ſubmit to ſleep, if this preſent period of our exiſtence was thoroughly happy; as it is not, it is a mercy that we are under a neceſſity of ſleeping out ſo conſiderable a part of it; and this very neceſſity is alſo a proof and conviction, that we neither are, nor intended to be perfectly happy in this preſent life. Whenever the happineſs of man is complete, God, the author of it, will not ſuffer it to admit of any interruption: "They reſt not day nor night, crying, Holy, &c." Rev. iv. 7, 8, 15.

Our whole behaviour by nature is a perpetual diſguiſe. The miſchief of this is, that we take ourſelves not only for what we appear to be, but for what we would be thought to be; and continue ſtrangers to the corruption of our hearts, and deaf to the word of God; the great purpoſe of which is, to diſcover and make known that corruption, the method of cure, and the neceſſity of complying with it.

Nature ſhrinks from the ghaſtly apparition of its own corruption; will not believe it in good earneſt, thinks it may be retained (in part at leaſt) with impunity; flies from the ſight to ſenſuality and vain amuſements. It is a dreadful thing for man, captivated as he is by the ſpirit of the world, to be told that he muſt die to it by a deep abhorrence of his ſtate. This ſhews the neceſſity of

that

that divine touch upon our ſpirits, called Faith; and the effect, wherever it is produced, proves the reality of it.

1 Sam. xii. 21. together with Iſa. xlv. 20, 21. Jer. xvi. 19. "And turn ye not aſide, for then ſhould ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver." See here the miſchief and venom of idolatry. Man is in a fallen ſtate; wants deliverance; cannot help himſelf; and yet, by a ſtrange perverſeneſs in his will and underſtanding, turns from the only Being that can help him, to things confeſſedly more impotent than himſelf. Sad proof of his degeneracy, and of the blind ſubjection he is in to evil ſpirits.

This world is confeſſedly not the region of happineſs; all is uncertainty, diſappointment, and deluſion: One would think, therefore, that thoſe at leaſt who pretend not to love it, and to dread its ſnares, ſhould be glad to be removed out of it into a place of ſafety and happineſs; but, generally ſpeaking, they deſire to be excuſed, and there are very few who really deſire it. Alas, it is to be feared that even thoſe who are called, and think themſelves, Chriſtians, are ſadly inſincere, and little known either to themſelves or others.

I believe the higheſt angels are the humbleſt of all creatures. They neither glory in their rank, nor aſcribe their ſtate and continuance in it to their obedience and readineſs to the will of God; but caſt their crowns down before the throne, as knowing

knowing they are what they are by continual influxes from thence; and yet vile man thinks it hard that he may not make ſome reckoning of his works and ſervices, even in his polluted, unregenerate ſtate.

It is the nature of man to wrangle, fight, and ſhed blood. So long as men are men, there can be no ſuch thing as peace, national, civil, or eccleſiaſtical.

The concealment of our good actions may proceed from pride, and without due care and reflection will increaſe it to a dangerous height. We ſhall be apt to make ourſelves amends at home for our ſelf-denial abroad, and pay ourſelves to the full that applauſe which we think we ſo juſtly deſerve. And, O! how we hug the dear idol of ſelf-complacency, when it is tinſelled over with a ſhew of humility.

The carnal mind is the life of ſenſe; by which is not meant groſs ſenſuality, or immorality, but acquieſcence in our ſtate as ſuch, without any thought or deſire of a change; loving and adhering to the world; a full reliſh of earthly enjoyments, and a fondneſs for earthly comforts, and the means of procuring them. If this is the prevailing habit and temper of the mind, God is fatally excluded, let a man think what he will of himſelf, or what fair pretences ſoever he may make to religion: But, ſay ſome, "How muſt

we know when this is our caſe?" Never, till the doctrine of the croſs is in good earneſt attended to, and we come to underſtand the contrariety of ſuch a ſtate to the will of God, and conſider it as our abſolute unfitneſs for the kingdom of heaven. But then, this is not the whole of the carnal mind: To bring it farther into view, let us take our riſe from ſcripture: "Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees;" that is, of mere men, though ever ſo learned, "ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven:" For the Scribes and Phariſees here repreſent the great Doctors and Rationaliſts, ſo called, of all ages and places; and it does not appear from ſcripture that they were ſcandalouſly defective in point of morals, or what is commonly called virtue. What then ſhould be the reaſon that Chriſt, all mild and gracious as he was, ever ſpeaks to and of them with a ſharpneſs that ſeems to need an apology? It was becauſe they were foremoſt in a fatal error, and would be apt to lead others into it, viz. that of ſelf-juſtification, and the reality and merit of human virtue, which at the beſt is infinitely defective, generally founded upon rotten principles, and can never ſtand the judgment of God. This our Saviour ſhews plainly in the remainder of the chapter; and indeed in his whole ſermon upon the mount, as well as in other places of the Goſpel.

What an aſtoniſhing thing is ſin, which makes the God of love and Father of mercies an enemy

to

to his creatures, and which could only be purged by the blood of the Son of God! Tho' all muſt believe this who believe the Bible, yet the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin is but weakly apprehended by thoſe who have the deepeſt ſenſe of it, and will never be fully known in this world.

"Their heart is far from me." Some time ago this text was ſtrong upon my mind, but ſoon neglected and forgotten. Suppoſing it to be ſuggeſted and preſented by the Spirit for preſent uſe to no purpoſe, we may conceive the manner of the Spirit's working, and how it is quenched by man's reſiſtance or inattention.

The devil has great advantage from nature, puſhing down-hill, and ſometimes from the top to the bottom in a moment: The Spirit's work is up-hill. It is by the greateſt of miracles that any ſoul is ever brought to God.

How aſtoniſhing is the quantity of miſery in the world! How many thouſands are rending the air with the cry of pain or wretchedneſs! Strange, that ever there ſhould be ſo much; that there ſhould be any ſuffering in the creation of a good God! Doubtleſs there is a cauſe for it; and if Moſes had not told us what it is, we ſhould be for ever in the dark. O, Adam, what haſt thou done! O, man, what art thou always doing! O, Jeſu, what haſt thou not done to looſen guilt and pain; to ſweeten adverſity; to blunt the ſting of death; to reſtore happineſs in ſome degree to the earth, and inſure it in eternity!

Sin is againſt my retirements, againſt my prayers, againſt the ſacrament, againſt the bowels and wounds of Chriſt, againſt my poſſeſſion and enjoyment of him, againſt peace in life and comfort in death, againſt time, againſt eternity, againſt all my hopes.

I am ſure, both from ſcripture and long experience, of my weakneſs, that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do; and yet my ſelf-ſufficient efforts towards a better ſtate are a practical denial of this belief; inſtead of leaving it to God to verify his word, and execute his own promiſes, I would fain do all by a willing and working of my own.

A perſon may be high in ſaintſhip, and yet dumb to the queſtion, Do you not break every one of the commandments?

It is the general opinion of mankind, and what the Fathers, Chryſoſtom and others, flouriſh much upon with great confidence, that the will is free. I do not find it ſo. The captivity of my will is my miſery, and great complaint before God; nor do I think that if it was in equilibrio, any man upon earth would chooſe evil. The ſcripture affirms the contrary; and it is a great point gained, and directs to a neceſſary ſubject of prayer, to know that the will is bound, and that none but God can ſet it free.

If

If God ſhould do any thing but what he does, in any the minuteſt inſtance; ſend one drop of rain more or leſs; diminiſh one pain; heighten one enjoyment; add or take away one moment of life, the conſequence might be very bad; and yet, what is almoſt all the praying in the world for, but to tell him that we are diſpleaſed with his will, and deſire him to change it.

When ſin is to be renounced as ſin, and conſequently all ſin, the reſiſtance of nature is incredible.

If hypocriſy is taking up more reputation than we can anſwer in real worth, who is not an hypocrite?

Nothing is a greater proof of man's folly and corruption than that if he was left to chooſe his own happineſs, and order all events for himſelf and others, he would certainly ruin both himſelf and them.

Sin is the ſole cauſe of all the evil that is in the world, either as produced by it, or the puniſhment of it.

Forbearing ſin, becauſe I am to pray at ſuch an hour, or receive the ſacrament ſuch a day, is only putting it off to a more convenient time.

While the veil is upon the heart, the veil is upon every thing.

Whenever I ſpy a fault in another, I am determined to look for two in myſelf, and they will not be far to ſeek.

As meanly as I think of mankind, I ſtill find myſelf inordinately purſuing their applauſe, and am apt to fear their cenſure more than the diſpleaſure of God.

Every natural man has one or more good qualities, by which alone he eſtimates his work and character, and lives and dies an infidel to his bad ones.

Whatever we ſee without the Spirit's eyes, can have no other effect than to fill us with conceit of a knowledge which we have not, and ſeal us up in carnal ſecurity.

Hell is being given up to the full knowledge and eſſential malignity of ſin; the ſcripture ſays, without hope, and for ever; and it does not appear to me that any criticiſm has yet explained away the preciſe meaning of it.

Oppoſition to the will of God is the eſſence and ſole cauſe of all our miſery. There is no poſſibility of happineſs but in compliance with it, and yet there can be none in a forced conformity to it. It muſt of all neceſſity be the great object of the ſoul, its reſt and centre, and every thing muſt be ſacrificed to it cheerfully and with delight. Who ſhall bring us to this? For if it is not my nature,

I ſee at once that I can no more make myſelf ſo than I could make myſelf at the firſt.

The underſtanding diſcerns, in moſt caſes, as truly and immediately what is right, as the eye does light and colours; and why then does not the will always comply with the dictates of reaſon and judgment? It would if it was free.

Sin is the only thing which God hates, and almoſt the only thing that man loves.

There is not an outward ſin but we can reſolve againſt and abſtain from, to avoid ſhame and the cenſure of the world: Two things follow from hence; firſt, that natural weakneſs, in reſpect of ſin, is not ſo great as is pretended; the other is dreadful to think of, and dreadfully plain, viz. that if we do not reſolve againſt and avoid all ſin for God's ſake, from whom we know nothing is hid, we do not fear him.

Sin muſt be reſiſted, and the outward act of any ſin may be avoided; but we cannot caſt it out of the heart.

Senſible fear and love of God, or dread of his diſpleaſure, and an habitual, ſteady reſolution to ſecure his favour, is the work and proof of regeneration by a divine power; for naturally we neither have this diſpoſition, nor ability to acquire it.

When

When reaſon is convinced and duty evident, ſtill the will is bound, and no power of man can ſet it free.

The generality think of nothing but getting to heaven by a lie; either that they have little or no ſin, or that ſin hath little or no harm in it.

We tell God that we are ſinners, miſerable and helpleſs, but cannot bear to be told ſo by others.

Think not what you are or have, but what you ſhould be and are not, and then be proud if you can.

Chriſt ſays, "Sit down in the loweſt room;" but the loweſt, according to St. Paul, is ſo very low, that hardly a ſingle man will ſit down in it. Read *Rev.* iii. 10—18. *Gal.* v. 19—21. *Tit.* iii. 3.

With reſpect to a man's character, we had better be guilty of almoſt any ſin than what the world calls too much religion.

Man is fallen into a deplorable ſtate of blindneſs, impotence, and corruption; will not believe it in good earneſt; prides himſelf in his own abilities; will ſtand or fall by the light of what he calls his reaſon, and rejects his only remedy, which is dying to his ſtate and nature, his own works, will, and wiſdom, that Chriſt may live in him, and be all in all to him, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and, by theſe, redemption.

It is a rare thing for people to think themſelves fools now; it is eſteemed humility enough to think they have been ſo.

We could never have ſo goodly a conceit of ourſelves, if we had not firſt an undue opinion of ſelf-power; that is to ſay, unleſs we were proud, and full of a ſpirit of independency. It ſeems to be the moſt general opinion, that this was the cauſe of the angels' and of Adam's fall; and if ſo, it is the greateſt bar to the recovery of the ſoul.

Whatever was the ſin of Lucifer, it is probable the ſin of Adam was the ſame: It is natural to ſuppoſe the devil would tempt him to tranſgreſs in the ſame way that he himſelf did; as well knowing the ſad effects of it.

Virtue is chiefly conſidered by us as neceſſary for the peace and welfare of ſociety; and this is generally pretty well ſecured by that ſpurious thing which has the name of it, viz. convenience, eaſe, and a ſenſe of reputation. If our behaviour is but calculated to anſwer theſe ends, we look no farther; and, perhaps, wonder, in the pride of our hearts, why God does not, as he eaſily might, interpoſe to prevent the miſchiefs occaſioned by the perverſeneſs of a few: But then, He himſelf is ever and anon troubling the order of the world and the repoſe of individuals, by terrible inflictions. The conſequence is plain, we are ignorant of our ſtate, and live in a perpetual miſtake. God does not make ſo great reckoning of this life

as

as we do. He aims at the reformation of the heart; and the ſevere methods he takes to bring it about prove the neceſſity of ſuch a reformation.

What farther proof can we need of the wretched perverſeneſs and corruption of man's heart, than that he ſhould deſire, eſteem, and love the things which are confeſſedly unable to make him happy, and that what can, ſhould be the only thing he does not deſire.

The man who knows himſelf to be a devil is in a fair way to be a ſaint. *Rom.* iii. 9—18.

It is no uncommon thing for men to do good without virtue, give without charity, and pray without religion.

It is difficult to keep ſelf from mingling with the work of ſalvation. We think it hard that we may not be allowed to pay ſomething towards the price of it; to contribute ſome work or fancied worthineſs of our own; that is to ſay, (ſhocking thought) we would put ſomething of our own into the ſcale with the blood of Chriſt, to make it full weight.

There is ſomething odd happens in the mixing of Paganiſm with Chriſtianity. The appearance of Chriſtianity remains, the ſubſtance evaporates; the appearance of Paganiſm vaniſhes, the ſubſtance remains.

If we were left to nature to chooſe a God and a heaven for ourſelves, it would not be the God that made the heavens and the earth, nor our heaven that where he dwelleth.

Reading is for the moſt part only a more refined ſpecies of ſenſuality, and anſwers man's purpoſe of ſhuffling off his great work with God and himſelf, as well as a ball or a maſquerade.

Man is an errant bungler at God's work; he ſpoils all if he does but touch it with a finger. What a terrible mortification! to think that the buſineſs of his ſalvation cannot go forward unleſs he is ſeparated from himſelf; and, as it were, outlawed as a miſchievous perſon, or thrown into a corner as a piece of uſeleſs lumber.

Buſineſs, amuſements, company, a general reliſh of life, and a confuſed hope of mercy in God, or of future amendment, keep the ſoul tolerably quiet here: But how dreadfully amazing is it to think of its being conſigned to a ſtate of eternal reprobation, without one ſingle object to divert its attention from its own frightful nakedneſs.

It may not be improper to conſider every perſon we happen to be in company with in three reſpects, let his ſtation or circumſtances be what they will; 1. As having an high opinion of himſelf;—2. As one for whom Chriſt died; and—3. As naturally lying under great diſadvantages with regard to his ſpiritual concerns. The 1ſt

will be a caution to us not to affront or offend him;—the 2d will engage us to promote his ſalvation;—the 3d to pity his infirmities.

The greateſt want of all, is a want of the ſenſe of our wants. This is the root of infidelity.

The generality of thoſe who lead regular, moral lives, and think themſelves ſettled upon a good bottom, for having been baptized, &c. are but the more confirmed in a natural, unconverted ſtate by what they call their virtue. It is evident, from a hundred things they ſay and do, that the root of the matter is not in them.

Upon little occaſions, and for mere trifles, I can become a hell to myſelf. What ſhould I do with this accurſed nature, if I had no other company but devils, who would take a malicious pleaſure in goading and ſtinging me into their own torments?

Every man naturally turns upon his own centre, and is as much a detached ſyſtem from every other man, as one fixed ſtar is from another; what regard he has for the ſpecies, or connection with it, ariſes ſolely out of this very ſelfiſhneſs or individualſhip.

If we were but Half-Chriſtians, the world would be at peace with us.

What is generally meant by a moral man, is one who does not govern himſelf by the fear of God, or the Ten Commandments, but by a law of his own making.

It is matter of great ſelf-abaſement, and full proof of our depravity, that ſin, the only thing which God hates, we ſhould hate ſo little.

Did the ſight of your own deformity never make you ſtart?

We were made to live in God as our element, and are not in it: If this is not a fall, ruin and death, what is?

The devil will ſuffer us, nay, if it were poſſible, he would help us to put away every ſin but one, if he could be ſure we would keep that one.

"God lives thro' all life,"—the ſoul of man not excepted, which is no more ſelf-ſufficient than ſelf-exiſtent, but the moſt helpleſs of all beings, though it proudly challenges independence.

The world is not altered ſince the time of Socrates. Aſk one by one, and ſee who is not miſtaken as to the quantity of his wiſdom and goodneſs.

If we were naked and open to all the world as we are to God, and in ſome meaſure to ourſelves, how loathſome and abominable; what monſters ſhould we appear?

It is time to have done with future proſpects, or a vain imagination that we ſhall be happy, or more at eaſe, when ſuch a point is gained, or ſuch an impediment removed; whereas nothing is more certain than that every period of life, and every day will bring its own burden along with it; and that there is no poſſibility of happineſs, but in bearing it according to the will of God.

CHAP. V.

REPENTANCE.

THE repentance which precedes faith, conſiſts chiefly of a ſenſe of danger and a fear of puniſhment; but when we come to have a lively apprehenſion of pardoning love, and our adoption in Chriſt, it is genuine, filial ſorrow for having offended God.

Generally ſpeaking, it is to be feared we do not dread ſin, but the puniſhment of it; and yet till we hate ſin, as ſuch, and feel our miſery under it, it is in vain to talk of repentance.

Till we are ſo convinced of ſin, as fully to pronounce the ſentence of condemnation upon ourſelves, we ſhall not receive mercy, as mercy, but conſider it as a debt.

So long as we are joined to the world; acting in the main for worldly ends; attached to its intereſt;

tereſt; oppreſſed with its cares, or devoted to its pleaſures; we muſt either totally reject or explain away the Goſpel.

The law is not ſatisfied by an outward obſervation of it, but by the inward diſpoſition of the heart; we break it as much by a bare outward keeping of it only, as by living in an avowed neglect of it. Perhaps the beſt of men may find, upon conſideration, that they never performed one act of true and pure obedience in all their lives. What conviction is here! and what a terrible blow is this to our pride!

Humility is a true ſenſe of our ſtate, and muſt neceſſarily go before a cure; but then where is the virtue or merit of it? Suppoſe a man full of noiſome, ſtinking ſores, and ignorant that he is ſo, he would be a madman if he did not look out for a remedy whenever he came to be ſenſible of his condition, but more ſo if he took any merit to himſelf for knowing it.

When once we can bear to know the truth of ourſelves, we ſhall be little concerned who elſe knows it.

It is the vaineſt of all vanities, and pride in perfection, to pretend to ſeparate ourſelves from the world outwardly before we are ſeparated from it inwardly.

Corruption

Corruption is ſtrong; evil predominant; my ſtate is wavering; my ſoul in danger; Chriſt does not reign; I am in the gall of bitterneſs and the bond of iniquity, till I fully reſolve not to ſin.

No man has the leaſt glimpſe of the inſide of truth, till all conceit of merit and ſelf-power is annihilated, and he is pierced thro' and thro' with a ſenſe of his vileneſs and unworthineſs.

How happy are we when we can ſay truly, "Lord, thou knoweſt all my deſire;" and much more, when we can ſigh and groan, mourn and weep before God!

As God looks principally at the heart, ſo it is there he carries on his ſaving work.

We may poliſh our outward man, but what ſhall we do by it, but to get the name of whited ſepulchres?

Muſt I always be humbling myſelf, and going over the ſame track of repentance? Yes, till I have no ſin, and to the end that the ſame thoughts and words may take faſt hold of me, and become a habit by repetition.

I ſhould conſider the Æthiopian's ſkin, and the Leopard's ſpots more than I do, that I may pray more feelingly, and caſt myſelf wholly upon divine power.

Is there any ſuch thing as regeneration, or a change of nature, from ſenſuality to purity of heart, from fleſh to ſpirit, from ſin to holineſs, from the world to God? So the ſcripture ſays, and that nothing leſs is being a chriſtian.

I endeavour to take a meaſure of ſin, that I may know my obligations to Chriſt, and the neceſſity of his death for ſin helps me to take a meaſure of it. I hardly know which is firſt in the order of thinking, but all is well when they act reciprocally upon each other.

It is the Spirit's office to convince of ſin, becauſe he only has the power; nothing that others can ſay, or I can think, will bring me to a true ſenſe and feeling of it without him.

Till we know ſin, and feel the burthen of it in ſome degree, we ſhall be blind to every thing elſe in ſcripture, whether of nature or grace; we ſhall pray with great reſerve, and never mean half of what we ſay.

Rather than be ignorant of my ſin, Lord, ſpeak to me in pain, ſickneſs, loſs of earthly comforts, or any affliction thou chooſeſt.

I am all aſtoniſhment when I think of the number and greatneſs of my ſins, and how long my life has been ſpared that I might repent.

There

There may be an abiding conſciouſneſs of ſin with ſelf-condemnation, where there is not the leaſt degree of ſelf-indignation or ſelf-abhorrence. Humility is knowing that we are not humble.

There is a vaſt difference betwixt knowing and feeling ſin, and ſpiritual things. We know of ourſelves, or, by teaching, may be well-principled and abound in notions; but it is the Spirit only that makes us feel.

If we would put doing in the place of thinking, knowing, and wiſhing, we ſhould underſtand the meaning of *Rom.* vii. and be convinced of the want of a better righteouſneſs than our own.

Pride is ſeeing the defects of others, and overlooking our own. Humility is ſeeing, feeling, and lamenting ſin in ourſelves; not only paſt but preſent ſin; not only actual ſin, but the root of it in an evil nature, and all ſin without diſguiſe or extenuation, in all its guilt and malignity.

No man is humbled or ſincere with God, till he is willing to know the worſt of himſelf, and willing that all the world ſhould know it.

The Spirit's coming into the heart is the touch of Ithuriel's ſpear, and it ſtarts up a devil.

If I ſee myſelf bad enough for Chriſt, he ſees me good enough.

If my nature, heart, will, and affections muſt be changed, God muſt do it; for I can no more change them than I could make myſelf. God commands to ſtrike at the root of ſin; Chriſt puts the ax, ſharpened with his blood, into the hands of all who are willing, and the Spirit gives ſtrength to the blow.

Angels fell by being poſſeſſed of too much excellence, and man riſes into their place through vileneſs and emptineſs. O the depth!

God never makes any man what he ſhould be, without firſt making him know what he is. O God, take the veil from my heart; take the world, take pride, take ſelf out of my heart, and write there all thy laws, I beſeech thee.

It is an hard thing, and a ſore conflict, to renounce all ſin, as ſin, fully, finally, irrevocably; and probably many of thoſe who think they do, never tried it, and are hidden from themſelves.

Whenever I ſin in thought, word, or deed, or whatever ſin I commit, the penalty of death is incurred; the thing is done and paſt, and all the world cannot reverſe the ſentence. The right ſpiritual underſtanding and conviction of this is the beginning of faith, and throws us upon Chriſt.

Legal repentance is before the croſs of Chriſt, and brings us up to it; evangelical is after, and begins from it. The latter only is genuine, effectual, and laſting.

Is the evil I feel in myſelf painful and a burden to nature as ſin? Or could I be content, and perhaps better pleaſed with it, if I was ſure God would never lay it to my charge?

I had rather know a work of the Spirit in mourning for ſin, as diſpleaſing to God, in love to Chriſt, and becauſe it pierced him, than be at the top of worldly joy.

There is no poſſibility of enjoyment but in following the natural bent; for which reaſon virtue, to be happineſs, muſt not be only from principle, and as it were forced upon us by teaching, but the genuine reſult and feeling of a nature. And how can that be but by a new birth?

Whenever I know but the tenth part of my ſin, I ſhall know that I am not beholden to Chriſt for nothing.

If God did not lay the burden of ſin upon us, no man would lay it upon himſelf. How few ever feel it.

Repentance is forſaking ſin for God, for his favour, his bleſſing, and will.

I believe it will be found that the repentance of moſt men is not ſo much ſorrow for ſin, as ſin, or real hatred of it, as ſullen ſorrow that they are not allowed to ſin.

It is fatal trifling with our ſouls, and horrid deluſion to ſee ſin leſs, or condemn it leſs in ourſelves than we do in others, and who can deal freely with himſelf in this point without conviction from the Spirit of God?

I have no proper idea of the horrible, curſed nature of ſin as repreſented in the croſs of Chriſt; but if it is ſo ſeen as to be avoided, it is enough.

Seeing and condemning ſin in ourſelves as we do in others, without ſhewing it mercy, is repentance; and then who almoſt repents?

Every ſin, when newly committed, amazes and terrifies the ſoul, tho' the ſenſe of it ſoon wears off. How ſhall we be able to bear the anguiſh of all our ſins together, when conſcience, which forgets and extenuates none, brings them to our remembrance.

We may be fully convinced, that ſpiritual things are incomparably the moſt worthy of our eſteem, without giving them the preference in our affections. The former is a degree of illumination, the latter only is converſion.

A work of grace is carried on in the way of our own thoughts, and with the conſent of the will; but this concurrence does not effect the work, and is no more a proof of ſelf-power, than the earth's fertility, which is wholly owing to a bleſſing from the clouds.

The moment we ſin, there is an abſolute forfeiture of life incurred; nothing but mercy can now relieve us, and we muſt always ſee ourſelves in the light of condemned malefactors; for no future can undo what is paſt.

Till we ſee ſin, we can never ſee it taken away; but merely ſeeing and feeling the plague of ſin is not repenting of it; it is ſeen and felt in hell.

No man ever turns to God for help, believes in Chriſt, or prays for the Spirit till he is frightned at himſelf; and we need not know the worſt of ourſelves to be heartily frightned.

One ſin, fully known, and preſſing home upon the conſcience in all its guilt and malignity, leads to the diſcovery of more, for there is a fatal connection.

There may be a conſciouſneſs and conviction of ſin without hatred of it, real humility, ſelf-abhorrence, or the extinction of one ſpark of pride.—

Finding that I am deſtitute of chriſtian graces, and holy tempers, the queſtion is, how I muſt get myſelf poſſeſſed of them? And I am convinced at once I can no more introduce a new ſet of affections into my nature, than I could make myſelf at the firſt. If the ſcripture had not told us that this change can be effected by nothing leſs than a divine power, the thing ſpeaks for itſelf. Shew me a man of whom it can be truly ſaid, that he

he loves what he hated, and hates what he loved, and I will pronounce him to be God's workmanſhip.

I ſee leſs malignity in ſin, and can more eaſily forgive it, becauſe I conſider it, not chiefly as ſin againſt God, but againſt myſelf, my own eaſe, reputation, and intereſt; in this point, and a leading one it is, ſcriptural knowledge differs totally from natural. The repentance which brings us to Chriſt is toward God.

Lopping off the branches of ſin, is labour in vain, and always to be renewed; there is no way but laying the ax to the root.

Sin ſhould ſit heavier on the ſoul, and cut deeper into the heart, than the loſs of a firſt-born. Bleſſed are they that mourn, and who has not cauſe for it?

Till a man feels ſin as poiſon in his blood, and finds that he cannot get rid of it in this world, he will never think in good earneſt of another.

No man has any warrant from ſcripture to believe that his ſins are forgiven, unleſs he repents of them; that is, is heartily ſorry for them, and earneſtly deſires to be delivered from the power of evil habits, and an evil nature.

It cannot be expected that any man, not a groſs ſinner, ſhould repent; that is, charge himſelf with

with guilt and folly, and desire a change of his state, till he is convinced of the universal total depravity of human nature. If he is persuaded that there is any excellence, dignity, rectitude, or good belonging to the species, he will compliment himself with it all.

It is impossible for any man to know Christ to be a Saviour, till he knows himself to be a sinner.

Man is never in God's way in spirituals, till he quits himself and his own way. And this I take to be the most natural meaning of the words, "except ye be converted, and become as little children," who are confessedly helpless, incapable of acting for, and governing themselves, "ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

It would be thought monstrous arrogance, blasphemy, and invasion of God's prerogative, for any one to pretend to make the soul and body of a man: And yet perhaps it is no less presumption to pretend to any share in the creation of the spiritual man in Christ. How is it possible I should form the image of God in myself, when I do not know what it is? Nor ever shall, till it is actually produced in me. It is well for us that the want of such a previous idea is no hindrance to our reception of it; and for this we have St. Paul's word, who says, that what God worketh in us is exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. This deserves to be considered by the narrowers in all sects and parties.

Justification

Juſtification by faith can never be received, deſired, ſought after, or even underſtood, till the ſoul has been well diſciplined and broken under the preſſure of the law, and brought to a full ſight and experience of its inability to anſwer the demands of it. And our acceptance of the free grace of God in Chriſt will always neceſſarily be more or leſs ſincere, more or leſs fruitful in good works, in proportion to our ſenſe of the want of it.

Thoſe who have felt the miſery of an evil conſcience, and laid groaning with anguiſh of ſpirit under a heavy ſenſe of God's wrath, are comparatively in little danger of returning to ſuch a ſtate, after they have once been delivered from it.

I cannot get within myſelf, and yet all depends upon it. It is not enough to know that God ſees me, unleſs I ſee myſelf in my own frightful nakedneſs.

There is nothing like being pinched, and ſore galled with a ſenſe of guilt. Redemption by Chriſt will then be viewed in its proper point of light; the glad tidings of the goſpel eagerly embraced by the diſconſolate fainting ſoul. It is impoſſible for thoſe who never felt the trouble and uneaſineſs of a wounded conſcience, to deſire, or believe, or value the peace of God. It is by miracle that any man repents. Many ſee the folly of their conduct, and are ſorry for the inconveniences they have brought upon themſelves and others by it; but to be convinced of guilt

guilt before God, to have a ſight and ſenſe of our vileneſs, and a hearty deteſtation of ourſelves for it, is what I believe never happens but under the working and influence of God's Spirit.

God will have his grace acknowledged in the free pardon of our ſins. But this can never be till we feel and know in good earneſt that we are ſinners. God brings us under the bond of the law, that his mercy may be magnified in releaſing us from the terror, curſe, and puniſhment of it. The end of this procedure is to ſhew man his obligation to the performance of law, his demerit in the breach of it, and God's love in our forgiveneſs. And in our preſent circumſtances, there is no other method of introducing into the ſoul a ſincere love of God; for naturally we do not love him.

When God calls to us in our hiding-place, and ſays, "Where art thou?" The ſtouteſt heart will be afraid, notwithſtanding its covering of fig-leaves.

The knowledge of ourſelves, and of our ſinful condition by the fall, is one main point in religion; but then it is often a long time before we are enough pinched with the ſenſe of it, to pray in good earneſt.

When we find out our ſin in one inſtance, it ſhould convince us of the guilt of more yet undiſcovered, and lead us to the accurſed root of all.

All

All is deluſion and ſad miſtake till we know Chriſt inwardly and experimentally by the Spirit, as applying his whole ſalvation and every part of it to the ſoul.—1. In his ſore judgments, convincing us of the greatneſs and damnableneſs of ſin, and of our own ſin in particular.—2. In his comforts, raiſing us to a clear ſenſe of, and cheerful confidence in God, as a reconciled Father.—3. In his cleanſing operations, turning the ſtrong man out of poſſeſſion, and enabling us to ſay triumphantly, "Behold all things are become new." The great danger of miſcarrying in this work, is by paſſing too curſorily over the firſt ſtep, healing our wounds ſlightly, and juſtifying ourſelves too haſtily.

We are never ſo near heaven as when we find ourſelves almoſt in hell. We cannot ſtay long there.

It is impoſſible we ſhould ever be upon a footing of truth and ſincerity with others, till we know how to ſpeak the truth to ourſelves.

CHAP. VI.

JESUS CHRIST.

CHRIST comes with a bleſſing in each hand; forgiveneſs in one and holineſs in the other; and never gives either to any who will not take both.

Chriſt's forgiveneſs of all ſins is complete at once, becauſe leſs would not do us good; his holineſs is diſpenſed by degrees, and to none wholly in this life, leſt we ſhould ſlight his forgiveneſs.

I owe it to Jeſus that I have a moment's quiet.

The love of God ſprings from the knowledge of Chriſt, and it is impoſſible to man in any other way.

I owe Chriſt a heart, a will, a life.

The Lord's Chriſt is the ſoul's joy, ſupport, and confidence in all ſtates and conditions; riches in poverty, comfort in trouble, eaſe in pain, health in ſickneſs, life in death.

I ſee the glory and bleſſedneſs of God in giving his Son to die for ſuch ſinners as I am, and would give the world to have a lively gratitude and burning love to him in my heart, but can have no peace but in thinking he died for my ingratitude.

Chriſt's riches, as in himſelf, are unſearchable; in us they are ſoon told.

The ſalvation of man is as much the gift of God and the work of Chriſt as his life and being.

Chriſt

Chriſt never comes into the ſoul unattended: He brings the Holy Spirit with him, and the Spirit his train of gifts and graces. Lay the foundation in him, and leave it to him to raiſe God's building upon it.

Chriſt obeyed and ſuffered for me, that his obedience and ſufferings might be imputed to me; and becauſe no obedience or ſufferings of mine could anſwer the demands of divine juſtice, or be effectual to my purification. A maintainer of this opinion, at the ſame time affirms, it is no argument for the preſumption, impenitence, or lukewarmneſs of man; but an operative, and moſt efficacious principle of obedience, and a ſacred bond of gratitude upon his ſoul, to do and ſuffer in his turn, according to the meaſure and capacity of a creature, and to preſs to every height of virtue, after the example of ſo kind a conductor, in obedience to the commands of ſo gracious a Maſter, in confidence of the aſſiſtance of ſo powerful a Saviour, who died for him upon earth, intercedes for and ſuccours him from heaven, and hath taken him into himſelf by a myſterious union, that he might accept him to the reward of his own ſpotleſs holineſs.

It has been the general opinion of Chriſtians in all times and places that Chriſt ſuffered inſtead of ſinners, and that we have remiſſion of ſins thro' faith in his blood-ſhedding; but the opinion of an imputed righteouſneſs is far from being general; though a ſubſtitution is every whit as intelligible,

and perhaps as much wanted in one caſe as the other; and the ſame reaſons that hold for the rejecting one will equally hold for the rejecting of both.

The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is never imputed to any man who does not deſire and endeavour to be ſo completely righteous as not to ſtand in need of it.

Let him who rejects the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, conſider well what ground he ſtands upon, and what he has to truſt to.

The righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed, and applied by faith, becomes ſuch a reality as is not at all for an impenitent ſinner's purpoſe. If he knows what it is, and for what end it is given, he does not deſire it; nor do I think it poſſible for an impenitent perſon to believe it, let him pretend what he will. Chriſt is the glaſs in which we ſee God and ourſelves; and if we attempt to ſee either ourſelves or him through any other medium we ſhall fall into infinite miſtakes.

Chriſt ſtill manifeſts his Meſſiahſhip by his preſence, and ſays to the deſiring ſoul, as he did to the woman of Samaria, "I that ſpeak unto thee am he."

To comprehend the breadth and length, and depth and height of the love of Chriſt, we muſt firſt take the dimenſions of our own ſin.

I know ſo much of Chriſt as not to be afraid to look my ſins in the face.

Chriſt was Chriſt to a believing Jew before his coming, as well as now to a Chriſtian: Nay, the faith of the Jew ſeems to have been of a more excellent kind, as it had a thicker veil to penetrate through.

Chriſt ſays, "Take up the croſs;" and very evident it is that ſome of his commands, literally taken, have the croſs in them. Take this out, and then wherein does he differ from other legiſlators? Or what remains but a bare religion of nature? Which, we may be ſure, will never bear too hard upon fleſh and blood.

All the power and love of God is in the man Chriſt.

Chriſt is God, ſtooping to the ſenſes, and ſpeaking to the heart of man.

Chriſt brings down God to the capacity of man, and raiſes man to the nature of God.

Chriſt ſtands between the wrath of God and the ſin of man, intercepting the one, and purging the other.

Nothing in nature is life, light, and truth but Chriſt, and therefore nothing elſe can be ſo to the ſoul.

Chriſt

Chriſt ſaw and felt every ſin of mine diſtinctly, when he ſweat great drops of blood in the garden, and cried out upon the croſs, "My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me."

God will come near to us to judgment, and be a ſwift witneſs againſt us, whenever we dare preſent ourſelves at his bar in our own name.

Chriſt had moſt amazing love, and a piercing ſight of the danger and miſery of mankind, when the pain of the croſs could not hinder him from ſaying, "Father forgive them." A lively apprehenſion in us of what he then ſaw and knew, ſets us at work in good earneſt for ourſelves and others.

Not the outward ſun to cheriſh my body, and invigorate the animal life; but the warmth, light, and healing rays of the ſun of righteouſneſs.

When we had loſt all by one father, God gave us another to recover it to us with advantage; and our life is now ſafe in Chriſt's keeping.

God gives me Chriſt; Chriſt puts a ſword into my hand, and the Spirit enables me to apply it to the root of ſin in my heart.

Chriſt is God in man, that man might be in God; ſhewing what man will be when God is in man, and what man muſt be to be in God.

We

We come from God through the loins of the firſt Adam, and return to him through the bowels of the ſecond.

Chriſt can be nothing but himſelf in every ſoul where he comes, loving his own life, doing his own works, rejecting all ſin, and ſeeking only to pleaſe God.

It muſt be ſo for Chriſt's ſake; there muſt be a ſincere renunciation of all ſin for his love who died for me, and becauſe I hope to ſee his face in heaven to whom I have ſo great obligations.

Chriſt's peace is his peace altogether, dearly purchaſed by him, and given to ſinners ſtanding in need of it. If it is to be of my own procuring, and I can have none but by entire freedom from ſin, I am undone.

I owe Chriſt ten thouſand thouſand times more than I can pay; and all he requires of me is to accept a diſcharge, and ſettle my love upon him; not as any part of payment, but becauſe he knows I cannot otherwiſe be happy.

If ever we get to heaven, we ſhall know that we do not ſing praiſes to the Lamb for nothing.

"Who has aboliſhed death" and damnation, by his death and reſurrection, and "brought life and immortality to light by the goſpel;" reveal-

ing,

ing, offering, and conveying it to all that believe and accept it as God's gift, live for it, and rejoice in it as their portion and inheritance from the Lord.

Chriſt, by taking our ſin upon himſelf, took it clean away from us; baniſhed it out of the creation, and eternally annihilated it to every believer, who is as far from the charge of it before God, as if there never had been any ſuch thing in the world; and if he did not do this for us, he did nothing; if we have one ſin remaining that he did not expiate, we are ſtill under a ſentence of death.

The two main pillars of Chriſt's religion are the depth of ſin, and the height of righteouſneſs, and none but he could atone for the one, and perform the other.

A thouſand ſaints, with all their fortitude, patience, and united efforts, could not bear the burden of one ſin. What then did Chriſt endure when all the ſins of all the world were laid upon him.

"Herein is love"—ſuperlative, inconceivable, infinite;—"that he ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins"—without exception of any ſins or ſinners. Why do I not ſteadily believe it? Why do I harbour a doubt of it? Why do I ever forget it? Why am I not always rejoicing in the happy aſſurance of it?

Some

Some look unto Chriſt with godly ſorrow, gratitude, love, and a purpoſe of obedience; ſome with horrid preſumption, and the deceitfulneſs of a deſperately wicked heart, to make him a cover for carnal indulgence; the generality with great coldneſs and indifference.

Chriſt ſays to man, "live," not for any good he ſees in any man; but when he is, and becauſe he is lying in his blood. He can enlighten the dark heart; he can purge the defiled heart; he can bend the ſtubborn heart; he can fix the inconſtant heart; he can quicken the dead heart; he can ſpiritualize the earthly heart; he can univerſalize the ſelfiſh heart; he can comfort the ſorrowful heart; all cold and icy as it is, he can make it a heart of pure love; he can be himſelf in the heart. Bleſſed be his name!

O Jeſus! my Lord, and my God! my Saviour by thyſelf, from myſelf! how wonderful art thou! What ſhould I do but for Chriſt? another queſtion completes the character of the chriſtian, What ſhall I do for Chriſt?

God teſtifies to me, to my ſoul, that Chriſt has riſen from the dead, and I with him, by an indiſputable, abiding matter of fact, viz. his ſending the Holy Ghoſt into my heart.

Chriſt in me will be the ſame God-devoted, ſin-hating, ſoul-loving, ſelf-denying, ſuffering, labouring Chriſt that he is in himſelf.

Nothing but the blood of Chriſt can waſh out the foul ſtains of my life; and that will do it. As ſure as ſin is death, Chriſt is life.

Without Chriſt we ſhould never have known what ſin is; without the knowledge of ſin we ſhould never have known what Chriſt is. O, my ſoul, magnify the Lord, and rejoice in God thy Saviour.

CHAP. VII.

FAITH.

FAITH does not conſiſt in thinking that my ſins are comparatively little, and therefore may be forgiven; but in knowing that they are very great, and believing that, though they are ever ſo many and great, paſt or preſent, Chriſt's blood is above them all.

Nothing but Chriſt's blood, taking away, and as it were annihilating ſin, can quiet an awakened conſcience. Repentance implies an abiding ſelf-diſlike and ſelf-abhorrence, and can neither deſtroy the exiſtence, nor extinguiſh the remembrance, nor heal the ſmart of paſt ſin; the torment of it can never die but with a conviction that Chriſt took it all upon himſelf.

My ſins are many and great, and continually ariſing up againſt me; but I muſt not, I muſt not make

make God a liar, deny my Saviour, and grieve the Spirit by refuſing his comfort. I may have more joy of Chriſt than I could have had of innocence or any ſanctity of my own. O, Adam, what haſt thou done! O, Jeſus, what haſt thou not done!

The man who has no doubts and fears has no faith.

Perfect obedience being impoſſible, it is neceſſary that all ſhould have ſome reſerve at hand in the want of it; ſomething to ſupport their hope, and give peace to their conſciences; ſincerity or Chriſt: But the former can no more be pleaded than perfect obedience; and if faith on Chriſt, ſuffering in our ſtead what we ſhould have ſuffered, and doing for us what we cannot do, is not our appointed relief, the caſe of mankind is deſperate.

If Chriſt will take my ſins, I may well give him every thing elſe.

"Fides Chriſtum mihi donat, charitas ex fide me proximo." *Luther.* That is, Faith gives me Chriſt, and love from faith gives me to my neighbour.

God grants me forgiveneſs, not becauſe I have ſo much repentance, or ſo much obedience to bring him as the price of it, but of his free goodneſs; becauſe I want it, and muſt be undone

without it; and becauſe he knows, whether I do or not, that I have only one thing to ſay to him, "God be merciful to me a ſinner."

The ſcripture bids us do every thing, and at the ſame time tells us that we can do nothing; the concluſion is, that what is commanded muſt be done, and cannot be done without help.

Chriſt crucified for our ſins is the chief thing in our religion we ſhould know, and almoſt the only thing which the generality of the Church of England do not know.

Chriſt came into the world to take away my ſin, by taking it upon himſelf; and if I go to him with it, my comfort is that it cannot be too great for him.

The experience and poſſeſſion of divine pity is better than bodily eaſe, freedom from trouble, or the greateſt worldly proſperity.

What has not God given me, in giving me a will to pray! All the reſt is his work; and I am as ſure as his word and promiſe can make me that not one prayer will be loſt.

I ſhall obey when I have the will, and none can ſet it free but God: It is the mountain which faith has to remove. Thinking we have moſt power where we have the leaſt, is the great error of the world, and has been mine all my life.

What

What a mercy above all miracles that I, who am a ſinner, a threeſcore years old rebel, and have done that every day of my life which loſt Adam his Paradiſe, and brought death into the world, ſhould have my abode on earth prolonged; that if it be poſſible I may not come ſhort of my birth-right; that I may leave off ſinning, and ſay before I die, "Lo, I come to do thy will!"

When I think what the devil can do in conjunction with my nature, what I have been, am, and ſhall be, it is tranſporting news to be told that there is ſuch a thing as believing unto righteouſneſs, and that ſalvation is wholly in and by a ſubſtitute. This is a hard point; and yet if God is always the ſame, there can be no other poſſible hope for a creature always ſinful.

I am as ſure, on the word and promiſe of God, that my ſins are done away in Chriſt, as if an angel were to bring me a releaſe in writing, or I was now in heaven out of all danger: Shall I not be at God's bidding for this, and put myſelf into his hands for the further mercies of gratitude, love, obedience, a willing heart, and heavenly affections?

The angels do not work for life or reward, becauſe they are already poſſeſſed of it, penetrated with a lively ſenſe of God's love to them in their happineſs; and therefore all on fire to do his will; ſo ſhould we, if we would but enter more into the knowledge and preſent poſſeſſion of our happineſs by faith in Chriſt.

From

From the depth of my ſin, and moſt aſtoniſhing evil, I raiſe ſome faint conception of God's love in Chriſt. Well might he ſay, "My ways are not as your ways, &c." *Iſa.* lv. 8.

Chriſt came to teach a pure morality, and aſſert the neceſſity of a perfect law-keeping, but does not expect to find it in us; he therefore wrought it for us.

No ſecurity till Chriſt puts his wedding-ring upon my heart.

Power to conform the underſtanding, will, and heart to ſcripture, is as much a gift from heaven as ſcripture itſelf.

By poring continually upon my ſins, and ſetting them as it were in battle array againſt the blood of Chriſt, I hold off my remedy, make little account of the word of God, and muſt thank myſelf if I never know peace.

In another man's caſe, I ſhould certainly think one drop of the blood of Chriſt ſufficient for all his ſins, tho' ever ſo many and great. In my own I cannot think ſo for my life with any degree of ſtedfaſtneſs.

What I ſpeak, think, invent, write, as of myſelf, puffs me up with conceit, and is a ſweet morſel for pride. Thinking it to be from God would humble me, as every thing does which we know to be purely a gift, let it come from whom it will.

No

No muſic like Aaron's bells. Mercy and propitiation thro' our great High-Prieſt ſound ſweetly to the purged ear.

At home with God; ſatisfied and rejoicing only in the ſenſe of his favour, in my heart's choice of him, in the privilege of preſenting myſelf before him in faith, and longing for his promiſes.

The man who comes to Chriſt, without any deſire or expectation of being created in him unto good works, and having his nature renewed in holineſs, is a fool, or an infidel. He neither knows nor believes one tittle of the goſpel.

We need not be afraid to look upon our own deformity, great and ugly as it is. Chriſt died for the ſins of the whole world; and, therefore, if I had all the ſins of the world in my own perſon, I would not doubt of forgiveneſs.

The remiſſion of ſins, apprehended by faith, is the diſſolution, or ending of ſatan's kingdom in us; and the beginning, foundation, and principle of a new nature, ſtate, and life in God through Chriſt.

I cannot give myſelf to Chriſt, he muſt give himſelf to me.

God does not offer me health, long life, plenty of worldly accommodations, reſpect, diſtinction, principalities, univerſal empire; but, O! unutterable

terable grace! himſelf. The greatneſs of the thing, ſo infinitely tranſcending all that we can deſerve, hope for, or conceive, overwhelms the underſtanding, and is apt to ſtifle our belief of it.

Let God work, my own efforts by being truſted in, having a tendency to exclude him and hinder his progreſs.

The ſcripture ſpeaks in vain, if God does not ſpeak it again in the heart. Knowing is not willing, though it is generally miſtaken for it.

To have God hold the great burning glaſs in his hand to bring all my ſins to a point, how dreadful! and what a glory is then to be ſeen in Chriſt!

If I had not ſinned as I have, I ſhould never have prayed as I do.

My work is my pleaſure, and joyous happy ſtate. I find in it all I want; and do not ſtretch my thoughts beyond it for more ſatisfaction from any thing elſe.

Make no more reſolutions to do what you never will; but know your weakneſs; truſt and pray.

Unbelief or doubting of the power and will of God to convert others, though ever ſo illiterate or obſtinate, ſelf-righteous or wicked, is the ſame want of faith as it would be in my own caſe: The

The obſtacles may, or may not be greater, but nothing is too hard for God. If we cannot help ourſelves to the graces we want, let us not pretend to it, nor make vain efforts in our own ſtrength, but wait patiently upon God, and be as clay in the hands of the potter.

Nothing greater can be ſaid of faith, than that it is the only thing which can bid defiance to the accuſations of conſcience.

Faith ſuppoſes that there is ſin in every one to be forgiven, and that God is glorified by the forgiveneſs of it. Deny either and you loſe Chriſt.

Faith can do more than remove mountains; it can ſtill a clamorous conſcience; make a bad conſcience good; ſoften a hard heart; bend a ſtubborn will; and bring God and man together.

If ſin was ten thouſand times worſe than it is, and I had ten thouſand times more ſins than I have, I would look beyond them all to Chriſt.

The Chriſtian is happy in Chriſt's forgiveneſs, Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and Chriſt's beatitudes; but chiefly ſo in the two firſt, and only unhappy becauſe he is imperfect in the laſt.

In Chriſt we are as innocent and clear of all blame before God, as Adam was at his creation. This is the great myſtery, great truth, and great comfort of the goſpel; and if it is not true, all ſcripture is falſe, or comparatively little worth.

My ſins and wants threw me upon Chriſt when I knew much leſs of him, and of my need of him, than I do now.

I believe for the remiſſion of ſins; I believe for Chriſt's righteouſneſs; I believe for power to love God and man; I believe for belief; and God knows I had rather be a believer than a king.

Chriſt muſt have died for me if there had not been another man in the world; and I believe as much that he died for me as if there never had been another.

Chriſt ſays, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Giving me to underſtand that he muſt do it; and therefore I will never attempt to make myſelf whole. I would do ſomething for Chriſt, but I can do nothing for myſelf, and he knowing this, did all for me.

I have been many years endeavouring to come to peace by a conqueſt of ſin, inſtead of going firſt to Chriſt for the pardon of it.

Chriſt's peace is not freedom from ſin, but the forgiveneſs of it; and it cannot conſiſt with the love of ſin.

If one man had all the graces and good actions that ever were in the world to plead for himſelf, they would not juſtify him to God; and if all the ſins of all the world were to meet in the perſon of one

one man, the blood of Chriſt would infinitely outweigh them.

If it was not for Chriſt, conſcience would tear me in pieces. Conſcience is the moſt poſitive, teazing, tormenting thing in the world; and nothing can ſilence it but faith. Conſcience is the viper on Paul's hand; and its nature is to ſting, inflame, and kill. Why then do not I ſwell, or fall down dead? I know.

I know my ſins are a vaſt heap, and more in number than the hairs of my head, but I will think no more of them (ſave to deny and try myſelf) for the remainder of my life: I will look only unto Jeſus; and if a better obedience does not ſpring from this faith and looking, I ſhall for ever deſpair of attaining to it. 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

It is unbelief altogether, and abſolute denial of the work, ſatisfaction, and merits of Chriſt, to think that I have one ſin about me unforgiven, or belonging to me.

Thank God for Chriſt; Chriſt for a clean conſcience; and the Spirit for giving me a ſight of it as clean.

Believe that you are a ſinner under condemnation, and that Chriſt releaſed you from it by his death, and then deny him any thing if you can.

As bad as I am, I ſhould be worſe if it was not for my belief of the croſs.

If I had not God in Chriſt to think of and ſpeak to, to make me wiſer and better, and happier than I am, and to go to when I die, I ſhould think myſelf undone.

I find it difficult to believe that God can forgive me, becauſe I cannot forgive myſelf. There is great comfort in *Iſa.* lv. 7, 8. "Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, ſaith the Lord."

God does not expect to be loved and praiſed by us but for his benefits, as proofs and tokens of the riches of his nature; and, as weak, dependent creatures, we muſt look up to him for the communications of his goodneſs, and think ourſelves more happy in receiving from him what we want than if we could give it to ourſelves.

He who, with a conſciouſneſs and acknowledgment of great imperfection, truſts in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is a better Chriſtian than a more perfect man who truſts in his own.

He who does not rejoice in the Lord, and feel God's peace as a cordial at his heart, is a Chriſtian of a low form, and hardly a believer. Why are we ſo often lumpiſh, heavy, and almoſt at our wit's end, but becauſe we look for comfort in ourſelves

ourſelves more than in Chriſt, and do not charge it enough upon our ſouls to rejoice purely, ſimply, and only in him?

When we have received nothing from God, we think we have enough of our own, and are ſufficiently proud of it; what we receive from him, in anſwer to prayer, under a ſenſe of our poverty, is all placed to the account of Grace, and humbles us in the duſt.

October 4, 1771, I had a moſt lively ſenſe in a dream of a full dependence on God for help in time of diſtreſs, far beyond any thing I ever conceived, or can retain when I am awake.

Look forward to increaſing weakneſs, decay of intellect, ſenſe and memory, certain pain, ſickneſs and death, without a wiſh for paſt enjoyments, and with a hope full of immortality.

The mercy of God is above all my ſins and all my fears; and when I perceive it in my own mind and conſcience to be ſo, ſee the neceſſity of mercy, and joyfully embrace the offer of it, "the Spirit beareth witneſs with my ſpirit;" and the witneſs is good without and before works, and faith perceives itſelf by its own light. O Father, ſweet is thy mercy; O Jeſu, ſweet is thy love; ſweet, O bleſſed Spirit, is thy teſtimony to the ſoul.

I ſee nothing but ſin in myſelf; in God nothing but mercy.

God

God put the yoke of the law upon the necks of the Jews, the Devil puts it on the necks of Chriſtians.

I would not be without direction, reſtraint, and aſſiſtance from God if I might; dependence on him is my ſecurity, happineſs, and great glory; he can do all things well; I am ſure I cannot: And how will my ſoul exult in his goodneſs, glow with gratitude, bleſs and adhere to him, when I know I am not overlooked, and that he has heard and helped me in the very thing I aſked of him; I queſtion whether any man ever truly loves and praiſes God till he has been ſo helped.

I will remember my ſins, every one if poſſible, with all their aggravations, but while there is a Bible in the world they ſhall not terrify me.

Chriſt took up all my ſins, and bare them in his own body on the croſs; and God cannot puniſh twice, nor demand a ſecond ſatisfaction to his juſtice. Take this comfort from me, and you may take the Bible.

If the blood of Chriſt, as applied for remiſſion, is my remedy in caſe of ſin, firſt and always, it is death to make uſe of any other.

God never pardons one ſin but he pardons all; and we diſhonour him more by not truſting in him for complete forgiveneſs than ever we did by ſinning againſt him.

When

When ſin, paſt and preſent, appears in its true ſhape, with all its horrid malignity, and deſert of damnation, then is the time for a full ſight of Chriſt: And, Oh! how gloriouſly does "the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſe," to the benighted, ſin-burdened ſoul, "with healing in his wings!" How ſweet is mercy; how precious the name Jeſus, and how dear his blood to the awakened, guilty conſcience! Let it ever be remembered how great the obligation!

With one eye upon Chriſt, I can look my paſt ſins in the face with the other, and be upon my guard againſt all ſin for the time to come. Self, in its very beſt ſtate, is no ground of confidence towards God, nor of deſpair in its worſt.

It is the will of God, and well-pleaſing to God, that I ſhould rejoice continually before him in the acceptance and poſſeſſion of his grace in Chriſt, as made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.

"Nothing can pacify an offended conſcience, but that which ſatisfied an offended God," ſays Henry; and well may that which ſatisfied an offended God, pacify an offended conſcience.

I, N. N. take thee Jeſus to my wedded huſband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for thy love, for thy croſſes, for thy work, for thy comforts; to love, honour, and obey ſo long as I ſhall live, aſſuredly believing that death will not part us. Lord Jeſus ſay, Amen.

What

What a fool am I, to be always laying the weight of my ſalvation upon myſelf inſtead of Chriſt.

I ſhould be inexpreſſibly miſerable, if I did not know that God forgives me more eaſily than I can myſelf.

I may ſtill look at the brazen ſerpent. I may look at Chriſt.

What hope could I have, if God does not forgive what I am, as well as what I have been?

Whenever I feel corruption ſtirring, and ſincerely lament it, but have not ſtrength againſt it; then is the time to fly to Chriſt, and rejoice in him; then may I have enough to bleſs God for, and may well bear with myſelf.

Remembrance of ſin, and ſenſe of redeeming mercy, will be the ground of praiſe and thankſgiving to God and the Lamb for ever in heaven. Why ſhould it not be ſo now? Seeing I have as good warrrant from the word of God to believe that my ſin is wholly taken away, as if I was actually in heaven.

We are apt fooliſhly and impiouſly to harden ourſelves againſt the comfort of ſcripture, by poring continually upon our ſins. Why, man, it is as true that Chriſt died for ſin, as that the wages of ſin is death, and full as dangerous to diſbelieve one as the other.

Thoſe

Thoſe who will not believe the remiſſion of ſins on the warrant of ſcripture, till it is inwardly ſpoken, or confirmed to them by a perſonal grant, make no account of God's word, and declare plainly that they will not truſt him without his bond.

If I rightly underſtood, and truly valued God's gift of Chriſt, I could not poſſibly be diſpleaſed with him for any thing elſe.

It is diſowning my belief, wronging my ſoul, and giving the lie to God, to think but for a moment that his mercy in Chriſt is not above all my ſins.

Some ſins I have forgot; many I remember, and theſe ſo heinous, that I cannot forgive myſelf for them; it is well for me that God, who forgets none, forgives all.

It is the great miracle, peculiar glory, and moſt endearing bleſſed excellence of Chriſt's religion, that conſcience, of all things in the world the moſt ſevere and inexorable, ſhould ever be pacified by it, and good, as it were in ſpite of itſelf.

Only God can bring light out of that darkneſs which I myſelf am. I can no more do it myſelf than I can ſay as he did at the creation, "Let there be light, &c."

The belief of Chriſt's atonement and imputed righteouſneſs, ſeems to be God's way for our attaining any degree of righteouſneſs of our own, or all the inherent and infuſed righteouſneſs we ever ſhall be capable of, and if this method is of God's appointing, it is dangerous truſting to any other.

The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and that ſpringing from a good conſcience; that is, a conſcience purged from the ſenſe of guilt by faith unfeigned. Chriſt is in this way the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, though it ſeem ever ſo abſurd to the reaſon of man.

The goſpel is a powerful engine for raiſing the fallen nature of man; but then God muſt have the working of it.

The remiſſion of ſins, apprehended and applied by faith, opens a new kind of intercourſe between God and the ſoul; the veil is rent that barred its entrance into the moſt holy place, and it now ſtands continually before God to receive advice, inſtruction, and all manner of gracious, ſanctifying influences.

The peculiar doctrines of the goſpel, juſtification by faith, &c. muſt not only be revealed to us, but in us; and God, therefore, reveals them to us, that we may go to him to have them revealed in us.

When

When we are wearied and quite ſpent with working out a righteouſneſs of our own, we caſt ourſelves with great advantage upon Chriſt for his; and there is then little danger of our being hurt by this doctrine. The ſenſe of ſuch a relief in our time of need, will be inſtead of a thouſand arguments to make us preſs on to the utmoſt perfection of holineſs we are capable of.

In the preſence of temptation, and the ſtirrings of luſt and corruption, what ſhould hinder me from ſaying, "Chriſt died for the ſins of the whole world;" and, therefore, for mine, if they were ten thouſand times more and greater than they are; and even thoſe very motions and workings of ſin, which I feel this moment in myſelf. This is not ſtrengthening, or yielding to the temptation, but a confeſſion of my impotence, and inviting the Holy Spirit to flow in upon me, and acquieſcing in Chriſt's method for my deliverance; and it is in this ſenſe and belief only that I deſire to receive remiſſion of my ſins, and an imputed righteouſneſs from his hands.

Lord, have mercy upon me, and help me: I am ſurrounded with enemies, which I cannot reſiſt, but in thy ſtrength, and muſt fall a prey to them without thy aſſiſtance. Suffer not thy name to be diſhonoured in the deſtruction of thy poor creature, and the triumph of the powers of darkneſs over thy promiſe for my ſalvation. Let the confeſſion of my weakneſs, and of my dependence

upon thee, prevail with thee in Chriſt to ſtand up in my defence; and do thou get the victory, and be glorified in thyſelf, and in thy own goodneſs. Amen.

When faith in Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins and the imputation of his righteouſneſs, is God's work in the ſoul, it operates to holineſs, and renews his image in us; when it is man's, it is weak at the beſt, often deluſive, and fixes us in corruption.

That is the beſt kind of faith which is productive of the greateſt holineſs. If man was left to himſelf, he would be apt to chooſe that which is productive of the leaſt.

The doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs is founded upon the ſuppoſition of non-perfection. If we ſtay for peace of mind and a quiet conſcience, till we have earned it by our works, we may ſtay till doomſday.

We may read, think, reaſon, be convinced, and willing and glad to acquieſce; but after all it is hard for any man to believe for the remiſſion of ſins in good earneſt till it is given him of God.

Every thing in religion is God's gift. It is better on all accounts it ſhould be ſo than otherwiſe.

Qua

Our own attainments are poor at the beſt, and can yield us but little comfort; but the ſoul, which cloſes heartily with God's operations, makes a ſwift progreſs under them, and rejoices over them exceedingly as evidences of his favour.

The renovation of the heart by the Spirit; the new man in Chriſt, charity, &c. is not the ground, cauſe, or condition of our acceptance and reward. Itſelf is our reward, at leaſt in part, and therefore cannot be the cauſe of itſelf. Thus Abraham's having a ſon was the conſequence of his faith; an additional ſuperabundant grace, or favour of God to him; the thing indeed he wanted, but ſurely not on the footing of merit. If St. Paul had ſaid that all the ſervices and ſhining qualities of the higheſt angels were of no value, and would profit them nothing without charity; would this imply that their having it was their title to God's favour, and to their high rank in the order of creation? It would be the ornament of their nature, and a neceſſary qualification for their proper happineſs; but ſtill the gift of God, and no more their merit than their being is. I believe we ſee at once the horrid preſumption of ſuch a claim in them. And yet wretched man is not to be driven from the plea of his own merit. Man will do ſomething, if not all for himſelf; he will earn his ſalvation, either in whole, or in part. It is the great Goſpel-myſtery to acquaint us that the attempt is vain, and that if ever we are ſaved, it muſt be by grace.

Thoſe

Thoſe who deny ſalvation by faith alone, do not pretend to ſay that it is by works alone; but partly by faith, and partly by works, and they will accept of Chriſt to make good deficiencies. But they might as well make ſure work of it, and take him for all. For their very beſt works, it is to be feared, will make but a ſorry appearance; and, conſequently, their own perſons, when tried in the balance, be found miſerably wanting.

There is no more abſurdity in truſting wholly to Chriſt, than there is in truſting to him only in part; to his atonement and righteouſneſs, than to his atonement only; or his atonement and righteouſneſs in part. Man wants him in all his offices and benefits; divided, he can be of no ſervice to us, and he will never be content to go halves with our pride.

Faith is the means of attaining to the Spirit, and the Spirit is the ſpring of our power and poſſibility of working. Faith in this view, and embraced for this end, will ſtand its ground againſt all oppoſition. There can be no pretence for decrying it as an enemy to good works.

The myſtery of the goſpel, as diſtinguiſhed from the law, conſiſts in changing the order of two words; one ſays, "do and live;" the other ſays, "live and do."

One would think that a poor labourer, ſweating out his term of threeſcore years and ten, to half-ſtarve

ſtarve a hungry family, though as ignorant of ſpirituals, and as unconcerned about them as a brute, was better employed, and in a higher ſtate of purgation than a Monk at his offices: Nevertheleſs, the ſcripture makes no allowances, when it ſays, "this is eternal life to know thee, the only true God and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent." And if reaſon was allowed to bring in its exceptions, they would be endleſs.

It is impoſſible for a conſiderate perſon to think himſelf ſafe upon the foundation of his own works. The conſequence is plain: We have then nothing to truſt to but an act of grace from God, or ſomething that is not our own. And yet by a ſtrange perverſeneſs, when the only proper relief is propoſed to us, we naturally reject it, either in whole or in part.

The law, not performed, drives us to Chriſt for remiſſion; and Chriſt received, brings us back again to the law, with all poſſible advantage for performance; for he came not to deſtroy the law, but to fulfil it.

If we knew the goſpel to be what it is, and what the angels, who (one would think) knew, ſaid it was, viz. "glory to God in the higheſt; and on earth peace, goodwill towards men;" or, a full diſcharge from all guilt and blame; and from the bond of law, as a covenant, we ſhould be apt to ſay of it, "it is too good news to be true."

The

The mercy of God in the forgiveneſs of our ſins, can never be underſtood or believed, can be no motive of love, gratitude, and obedience, till we know the extent of our obligation in a full conviction of our demerits. But this can never be, ſo long as we pride ourſelves on the rectitude of our nature, and ſtand upon the falſe bottom of a few moral performances.

We believe, in order to be holy, and therefore need not be holy in any meaſure, in order to our believing.

It is a denial of the goſpel to ſuppoſe that we muſt be changed from ſin to holineſs, before we may venture upon Chriſt for his ſalvation. Then faith is unneceſſary, and no longer the foundation of holineſs. And if we can thus change ourſelves, we can do all without Chriſt and his Spirit. Horace's "ſunt verba & voces, &c." is a vain boaſt; Cicero's Offices and the divine Plato can do me no good. Chriſt "delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification," is the religion I want.

I cannot love my neighbour as myſelf, till I love God with all my heart. I cannot love God but from a ſenſe of his love to me in the forgiveneſs of my ſins; and I cannot receive forgiveneſs from him as a benefit till I know my want of it.

To ſay that we are juſtified by works, is ſaying that we are juſtified by ſin. Put the good actions of

of the beſt men into one ſcale, and their bad into another, and ſee whether the latter will not preponderate. And if ſo, the reſult is ſin.

It is to be ſuppoſed that thoſe who talk of being juſtified by works, ſeparate all imperfection, and alloy of evil from their good ones, and leave the bad quite out of the account.

I am convinced with the greateſt fulneſs of aſſurance, and by an inward feeling above all demonſtration, that nothing can help me in my ſpiritual recovery but God. And my recovery in any tolerable degree will be as full a proof to me of his help, as the world is of his being. This is the ſenſibility I wiſh for: And if I can acquieſce in any thing leſs, all other marks will be fallacious.

Whenever I die, I die a ſinner; but by the grace of God, penitent, and, I truſt, accepted in the Beloved.

I have ſome degree of power over my outward man, but little over my inward. I can make a ſhift to be juſt, do acts of kindneſs and humanity, and put on a ſhew of courteſy and civility; but the bent of my heart is ſtill the ſame. I can no more love God with all my heart, or come up to St. Paul's deſcription of charity, than I can reach heaven with my hands. In this point of view, what a ſeaſonable aid is goſpel power! and how exactly is the religion of the Bible ſuited to the wants of mankind, in its offers of forgiveneſs and renovation.

That ſame law which we cannot bear as a yoke upon our necks, we ſurvey with pleaſure, and take up willingly when it lies at our feet.

The doctrine of juſtification by faith alone, could never ſtand its ground long at a time. This is to me a proof of its truth and excellent tendency. It is not at all for the purpoſe of a corrupt world; and therefore it is no wonder it ſhould be rejected, as often as it makes its appearance.

Sinful man, ſaved in Chriſt, always was, and always will be a myſtery. But where is the myſtery of our being ſaved by an inherent righteouſneſs? O! why does ſinful man for ever diſpute againſt his remedy, and return to the beggarly elements of the world, fleſh, and the powers of nature, when the mercy of God is ſo plainly declared, and ſo fully made over to him, as his only help and comfort? St. Paul told the Jews of his day, that juſtification was by faith only, and not by the works of the law. Suppoſe now they had underſtood this aſſertion of the ceremonial law, as many have done ſince, might they not very juſtly have ſaid, "neither do we look to be juſtified, or accepted with God for our obſervation of the ceremonial part of the law, but for our obedience to the whole law, and eſpecially the moral?" It is plain therefore that St. Paul, in ſpeaking of this matter, always means the whole law, *rotundè*, as Martin Luther ſays; or elſe the diſpute between them would ſoon have been at an end. He would only have affirmed what they never denied.

Did Chriſt die for ſmall matters? for trifling frailties? Few are willing to charge themſelves with more. Or is St. Paul's repreſentation of human nature true? and if it is, where are the believers? and what a blot does our pride make of the whole goſpel?

We muſt either think of God as a reconciled Father, or groundleſsly preſume upon his mercy, or be under continual dread of his juſtice. The firſt of theſe is the chriſtian ſtate, the ſecond is a ſtate of dangerous ſecurity, the laſt is a ſlaviſh ſtate, full of fears and terrors, and, if we think of God at all, will deſtroy the comfort of our lives.

Redemption by the blood of Chriſt (mark it well, O my ſoul!) is the groundwork of the majeſtic triumphant ſong of praiſe in heaven. *Rev.* iv. 9. And a diſpoſition to join in it, our chief capacity for, and actual happineſs in time and eternity.

Dung and prune a bad tree to all eternity, it can bring forth no other than fruit of its own kind. Underſtanding this is underſtanding the goſpel.

We are juſtified all at once, *ſimul et ſemel*, without law, and in ſpite of law; and for no other reaſon, but becauſe Chriſt died for us. When we are ſettled in this belief, law and conſcience are upon good terms again.

Chriſt ſaves us from the ſentence of condemnation we pronounce upon ourſelves; if we leave it to him to pronounce nothing can ſave us.

If ever we come to Chriſt, it muſt be conſcious of our own blindneſs, and with all our diſtempers about us: He is not ſo abſurd as to bid us firſt heal ourſelves, and then come to him for a cure. Staying till we can bring ſome kind of fitneſs or worthineſs of our own along with us, is groſs miſapprehenſion, if not total unbelief, and hinders many from ever coming to him at all.

If I was to live to the world's end, and do all the good that man can do, I muſt ſtill cry, "mercy!" Why then ſhould I be unwilling, or afraid to die this moment, with a ſenſe of God's pardoning love, when I can have no other claim to ſalvation, if I was to live for ever?

One would think it is but tolerably modeſt to ſay that God knows the way to heaven better than we do, and that it is lawful for him to preſcribe to us the terms of our admiſſion into it; and yet there is no propoſition more generally ridiculed.

The knowledge of my ſin, and of God's love in the forgiveneſs of it, is my only fitneſs for loving as that is for doing: Why then ſhould I be afraid to take the meaſure of my ſin, ſince it is to be the meaſure of my love and activity?

When

When we come to underſtand the nature and extent of chriſtian morals, we ſee at once the neceſſity of remiſſion and of divine help: Theſe are two material points of difference betwixt Chriſtianity and all the ſects of Paganiſm. The Stoics, who ſpoke excellently of virtue, and were the moſt introverted ſect, were withal ſelf-ſufficient.

Conſcious of my weakneſs, or rather deadneſs, I offer myſelf to God to be his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works: But finding that I can never have a righteouſneſs of my own ſo complete, as to be worthy of his acceptance, I offer up Jeſus Chriſt daily and hourly upon the altar of my heart, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the world; beſeeching God that it may be in the true fire of repentance and faith kindled by the eternal Spirit.

What makes a happy life? Knowing that we can ſmile upon death.

Human perfection is reality of deſire, and ſincerity of endeavour, and that in Chriſt is accepted; perfect righteouſneſs was attained only by Chriſt, and that is imputed: Theſe are two joyful truths of our religion; and I know of no other that can quiet the ſoul, or carry it on with ſo ſwift a progreſs towards real holineſs.

The righteouſneſs of God, *Rom.* x. 3. is no kind or degree of our own, however acquired, either before or after faith, and the new birth, but

but that which God beſtows in and with Chriſt. The righteouſneſs of God, according to the terms, muſt be abſolutely and every way complete; but who can think this of his own, in the higheſt and beſt ſtate of it?

I am ſure God will not put me into a great fire if a little one will do.

It is the property of faith, firſt to empty the ſoul, and then fill it with comfort, and ſtrengthen it for duty; at the ſame time that I ſee ſin in the ſhape of a fury, I ſee it nailed to the croſs.

If God ſees me in Chriſt, I cannot be in full poſſeſſion of the truth without ſeeing myſelf there.

All my earthly happineſs, quietneſs, and aſſurance, is from the knowledge and belief of Jeſus and hope of his ſalvation; but I have not a thouſandth part of the joy I ſhould have, if I delighted in him, and loved him in ſome proportion to his excellence, benefits, and love for me, and lived wholly for him.

I am as far off as ever by reſolving and attempting, in my own ſtrength, to do what I cannot. All depends upon prayer, patient waiting, and receiving. *Pſ.* cxxxi.

If Martin Luther was deceived, in ſubſtituting faith for ſalvation inſtead of ſelf-righteouſneſs, he was the greateſt heretic that ever lived.

I go to Chriſt with faith for faith.

One touch of Chriſt makes him mine, with all he has and is: In him I am well-beloved, clear of all blame, and perfectly righteous. All comes with this faith, love, fidelity, gratitude, pure obedience; without it, nothing.

It is a moſt reviving, tranſporting thought, that faith makes me as clean from all ſpot of ſin, as pure and perfectly white as a ſaint in heaven; and if I do not believe in Chriſt chiefly for this, what do I believe in him for?

What have I to do on the peril of my ſoul, but to take God at his word; to lay all my ſins down at the foot of the croſs; and then proſtrate myſelf there in humble adoration, pure love, and the moſt ſincere profeſſions of fidelity to my crucified Saviour?

He who has already done ſo much for me, will leave nothing undone.

Cordial, perfect cloſing with the will of God, from a root of faith, and lively ſenſe of Chriſt's peace, to do whatever he commands, to avoid what he forbids, to ſuffer what he ordains, will be a ſtep unto heaven; and I ſhall then know upon what plan life ſhould have been conducted, and what happineſs I have loſt.

"The Lord hath put away thy ſin; thou ſhalt not die;" the Lord ſpeaks this to me as much as he did to David; and tho' I do not always apprehend it with the ſame degree of clearneſs, or height of aſſurance, yet the ſcripture always ſays it for me; and I ought never to diſbelieve the word of God ſo much as for a moment.

The love of God in Chriſt, apprehended by faith, will give me an underſtanding, a heart, a tongue. Man's ſin is God's glory in the forgiveneſs of it by Chriſt; and God's forgiveneſs is man's eternal ſhame, if he continues to ſin againſt it.

Forgiveneſs of ſin by the death of Chriſt, is a reaſon why we ſhould never forgive ourſelves.

Every man is, what he once was, and always will be, a ſinner, notwithſtanding any repentance or future obedience, without an intereſt in Chriſt.

It is the joy of my heart that I am freed from guilt, and the deſire of my heart to be freed from ſin.

I ſee plainly that ſuch a one has better qualities than I have. But if I am more a believer, I have a much better righteouſneſs than any man can have in himſelf.

"No man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt: I do ſay that Jeſus is the Lord

Lord; therefore I ſay it by the Holy Ghoſt. This reaſoning would ſet a world of ſouls at eaſe, who are perplexed about the reality of their faith. They cannot deny the ſecond member of the ſyllogiſm, but will not be perſuaded that they have a faith of the Spirit's operation, becauſe it has not been given them in ſome ſenſible manner, or becauſe it is ſometimes aſſaulted with doubts, or becauſe they cannot prove it by a higher meaſure of holineſs. Query. What is that meaſure of holineſs which muſt prove our faith? and whether any thing can prove it but itſelf?

Either there is ſuch a thing as predeſtination to life, accompanied with a perfect renovation of heart, mind, and will, and then I do not find that I am of the number of the elect, as having no ſuch experience; or I may hereafter attain to the perfection of the predeſtinated; or Chriſt apprehended by faith is a ſafe ground of hope, with imperfection, a great remainder of ſin, and low degrees of holineſs in myſelf. In the laſt only I have comfort; and a bleſſed hope it is, if I do not make it a pretence for ſloth, or acquieſcence in my preſent ſtate.

Faith is truſt in the promiſes of God for eternity.

CHAP. VIII.

GOOD WORKS.

IT is the hardeſt thing in the world not to think our good works better than they are, and to make the very beſt keep their diſtance in the office of juſtification. Though we muſt be judged by and according to our actions, yet we ſhall not be ſaved for them.

Doubtleſs God takes care to qualify his faithful ſervants for the happineſs he intends for them; which is, the enjoyment of himſelf. And there can be no other poſſible qualification for this happineſs, or a capacity of receiving and enjoying it, but holineſs; that is to ſay, a full bent of ſoul towards God, and a hearty love and liking of all that he is, does, wills, and ordains. But then we muſt not pretend to bring this holineſs to account, as the ground of our acceptance. A perſon, who is continually receiving favours from another, may as well reckon the laſt to be the procuring cauſe of the firſt, as we make our holineſs, whatever it is, to be in any ſenſe the cauſe or ground of our acceptance with God. When we have done all we ever ſhall do, the very beſt ſtate we ever ſhall arrive at, will be ſo far from meriting a reward, that it will need a pardon.

The doctrine of juſtification by faith alone, is our fitneſs, advantage, and encouragement for the practice

practice of good works, and can never be made a handle for ſloth or licentiouſneſs, when it is preceded by repentance; as, if received in faith, it neceſſarily muſt be. And whoever entertains it as a pretence, or excuſe for not working, or doing his beſt, is ſtill impenitent and unbelieving, let him think what he will.

God makes himſelf a debtor to man, for his own goodneſs in man.

He that has once felt the peace of God, in the remiſſion of ſins, will hardly ſtop ſhort, or make it a handle for ſloth or licentiouſneſs. This would be as if a man was travelling to a certain country, and having by ſome means or other got a taſte of its excellent fruits, ſhould make it a pretence for going no farther, or turning back again.

It is well ſaid, that though faith juſtifies us, yet works muſt juſtify our faith.

Juſtification by ſanctification is man's way to heaven, and it is odds but he will make a little ſerve the turn. Sanctification by juſtification is God's, and he fills the ſoul with his own fulneſs.

The maintainers of imputed righteouſneſs muſt be content to undergo the mortification of being thought oppoſers or diſcouragers of good works: Though they conſtantly plead for them, and for their own doctrine as the beſt, if not the only ſure way of attaining to them, do not come a whit

behind their adverſaries in the performance of them; perform them more freely and ſincerely, and upon more generous principles of love, gratitude, and obedience, than thoſe who venture all upon their own actions, and make them the ground of their acceptance.

I truſt to Chriſt for ſanctification, and not to ſanctification for Chriſt. "Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord." But then holineſs is not the foundation of our reward. It is itſelf God's gift to us, in order to qualify us for our proper happineſs, and as the grand means of enjoying him, and therefore cannot in any ſenſe be the procuring meritorious cauſe of it. But nevertheleſs it is, by this kind of reaſoning, every way as neceſſary as if it was.

God pardons in order to cleanſe. And whoever expects forgiveneſs without any thought or deſire of being cleanſed, cannot receive it. It is impoſſible for God to forgive an unrepenting ſinner; and he does not repent who does not purpoſe and wiſh to be changed.

I know and believe that all I am, have, or can be, without charity is nothing. But I do not believe in charity for my acceptance with God.

Every other faith but that which apprehends Chriſt as a purifier, as well as our atonement and righteouſneſs, is falſe and hypocritical. He can only be received into the ſoul, when he is deſired for his goodneſs, and when he is there, he will not ſit down idle. We

We are accepted in Chriſt to the performance of good works, and not for them.

What motive to goodneſs is there in all nature, ſo forcible as the love of God in the forgiveneſs of our ſins? And what fitneſs can any one poſſibly have in himſelf for works or working, on whom it will not operate?

It is next to impoſſible to do good actions, merely becauſe they are good, till we are in poſſeſſion of that principle ſo ſtrenuouſly aſſerted by Martin Luther, viz. That our ſalvation is wholly of faith; and that good works are only a ground of comfort, as proofs of our faith, but ſignify nothing to our acceptance with God. And what a glorious recommendation of faith is this, that it is the only thing that makes way for the truth of obedience, from a pure motive of love? Our own intereſt in all the good we do, according to this notion, being quite out of the queſtion.

It is impoſſible for a proud man to have ſo much as one virtue; he wants the very eſſence of all virtue, viz. diſintereſtedneſs and a pure love of rectitude.

A perſon who believes in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, may truly ſay, "Lord, what love have I unto thy law!" The law is neceſſary as a rule, and amiable as a free ſervice, and performable in the power of faith. But as exacting ſtrict

obedience

obedience under the penalty of death, it is a heavy load upon the conſcience; and in that ſenſe aboliſhed to make way for a better diſpenſation.

A virtue wrought out of the ſtock of our own ideas, in our own ſtrength; that is, merely human or pagan, is without foundation; has no reality; and can contribute nothing to our happineſs. What, for inſtance, is the greateſt affability and condeſcenſion, without a root of true humility; forbearance of the outward act, without inward purity; patience without thankfulneſs; beneficence without love; and eſpecially what is zeal for religion, or exactneſs in a form, if it does not ſpring from a heart devoted to God, and relinquiſhing all for communion with him? But I am ſenſible, and know with the utmoſt certainty, that I can no more give theſe qualities to myſelf, in their inward deep ground, than I could make a world.

Chriſt's croſs truly believed will have two ſeemingly different effects; it will put me upon being as good as ever I can, and make me ſenſible that I am altogether vile.

There can be no true religion without love, no love of man without love of God, nor love of God without the knowledge and love of Chriſt.

All virtue which does not ſpring from the croſs of Chriſt is defective in ſome reſpect or other; and moſt horribly in over-rating itſelf.

It is the duty of every chriſtian to aim at perfection, and be going on to it; but he is a very ill-informed chriſtian, if not a down-right unbeliever, who depends upon it for ſalvation.

Faith goes before ſalvation, and works follow it; not to be made the ground of our juſtification, but as the neceſſary concomitants, and proper fruits of faith; and whenever obedience puts itſelf in the place of faith, St. Paul's words may fitly be applied to it, "know that thou beareſt not the root, but the root thee." Why then are works to be the great ſubject of inquiry at the day of judgment? Becauſe they are the viſible effects of faith, and only good as ſpringing from a root of faith, and the want of them proves of courſe the want of faith.

The life of faith can only ſpring from faith, as trees and plants do from their proper ſeeds. The generality know better what their work is, than where to begin it.

If I have faith in Chriſt, I ſhall love him; if I love him, I ſhall keep his commandments; if I do not keep his commandments, I do not love him; if I do not love him, I do not believe in him.

A believer does not do good works to be ſaved by them but in love to others, from a root of faith, and becauſe he is ſaved. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Love of Chriſt for what he is, as made

made known unto us by what he has done and ſuffered for us, is firſt; and keeping the commandments is not for ſalvation, but becauſe we are ſaved by him. Whatever we do on this ground is well pleaſing to God, and will have its reward; but 'tis abomination in his ſight, if we would obtrude it upon him as perfect in itſelf, and full ſatisfaction to the demands of his law.

It would be a great abuſe of the doctrine of ſalvation by faith, and a ſtate of dangerous ſecurity, to ſay, if it pleaſes God to advance me to a higher, or the higheſt, degree of holineſs, I ſhould have great cauſe of thankfulneſs, and it would be the very joy of my heart; but nevertheleſs I can do without it, as being ſafe in Chriſt; whereas there is no ſafety without an entire ſubmiſſion to the will of God.

CHAP. IX.

CHRISTIAN LIFE.

THE great miſtake of life, and the cauſe of all the wickedneſs and miſery in the world, is looking for happineſs here, and eſpecially in externals, where it never will be found. If we were in a ſtate of diligent preparation and patient waiting for it in another life, we ſhould have nothing to ſcramble or quarrel for, nor ever be diſappointed; we ſhould be freed at once from all vain anxiety;

anxiety; bear croſſes, help one another in love, rejoice in hope, and welcome death.

The things which God hath prepared for them that love him, are according to the revelation of his nature and will in Jeſus Chriſt. In this belief ſtudy to know him more and more; make him your treaſure and portion, and long for the everlaſting enjoyment of him.

In heaven we ſhall have a perfect knowledge of ſin, far beyond any thing we now conceive of it, in conjunction with the greatneſs of our deliverance, and the glory of redeeming mercy will be the eternal ground of our love and admiration. On earth it is the great exerciſe of faith, and one of the hardeſt things in the world, to ſee ſin and Chriſt at the ſame time, or to be penetrated with a lively ſenſe of our deſert, and abſolute freedom from condemnation: But the more we know of both, the nearer approach we ſhall make to the ſtate of heaven; and are our own greateſt enemies, if together with the fulleſt comprehenſion of ſin, and the deepeſt humiliation for it, we do not look unto Jeſus and ſee it taken away by the Lamb of God.

He is the greateſt ſaint upon earth who feels his poverty moſt in the want of perfect holineſs, and longs with the greateſt earneſtneſs for the time when we ſhall be put in full poſſeſſion of it.

Before you do any thing pleaſing to the fleſh, be ſure that you have God's leave; and whatever he commands, though ever ſo unpleaſing to the fleſh, be ſure to do it. Make a grievance of nothing but ſin.

Chriſt will accept nothing at my hands till I give him my heart; and when I do I ſhall not give him mites, though one will be well taken.

Nothing can be happineſs to us but what we think ſo; and yet thinking any thing to be happineſs does not make it ſo. It is, therefore, of the utmoſt importance to us to be well informed in the matter.

Repent, and believe; believe, and love; love, and obey; obey in love; and be as happy as you can be in this world.

Temptations are not ſins, but means of perfection, or cauſes of ſtrengthening the will, and thrown in our way that we may reſiſt them in the fear of God, conquer in his help, and increaſe our reward.

If I prefer any thing in my heart to God and his will, my whole ſtate and being, every thought, word, and work is ſinful.

God's coming and preſence in the ſoul is beſt underſtood by the power of it in the change it works in us.

It is a day loſt indeed, in which I loſe ground of heaven. When my will is united to God's I ſhall always have what I want. What hinders me from being thus religious and happy?

I have had but little thought or purpoſe of employing the talents which God has given me ſolely to his glory: Whenever I do this with a ſingle eye to pleaſe him, I need not be concerned what they are, one or ten, and ſhall be indifferent about the eſteem of the world.

What has God for me to do to-day? I am not to live to myſelf;—ſo I ſhould have thought all my life, and every day of my life; doing my work faithfully, praiſing God for appointing it, and deſiring no other happineſs.

He who is Chriſt's free-man, is made ſuch by chriſtian faith and obedience; he is heaven-taught; Spirit-led; has a ſingle deſire to know and pleaſe God better; is aiming at perfection, and grieving for nothing ſo much as the want of it.

A Chriſtian is ſtrong in reſolution, fervent in his deſire of holineſs, and makes the moſt violent efforts to attain it; but at the ſame time knows that it is abſolutely out of his own power; and, therefore, depends upon God for ſupport, and keeps cloſe to him in prayer for conſtant ſupplies of light, grace, and comfort.

If God ſays thou ſhalt not, a child of God ſays at once, I will not, in ſpite of ſtrength, of inclination, or violence of temptation. If God ſays, thou ſhalt, he ſays, in ſpite of cuſtom, difficulty, or danger, I will. This is freedom; this is happineſs; this is life and power from God; of which we may be as ſure as that we did not make ourſelves.

Enjoy the day in the day, without ſtretching your thoughts to ſome future time, and live to-day ſo as to enjoy to-morrow, but do not deceive yourſelves with much enjoyment from any day.

God's deſign is to bring us happily to himſelf in another world, and he will leave no means uneſſayed for this purpoſe: If we have the ſame end in view, and look up to him, as carrying it on ſteadily for us, we may be happy both here and hereafter; if we have not, the conſequence muſt neceſſarily be deſpondency, vexation, and fretfulneſs at the ways of Providence.

The will of God is my pole-ſtar, and with my eye conſtantly upon it, I ſhall be carried ſafely through all ſtorms and tempeſts.

I am not ſure of the preſent hour; I am ſure I have nothing to do with any thing elſe.

Bearing with thyſelf in the want of ſpiritual ſtrength, or abſence of ſpiritual comfort, is neither more nor leſs than bearing with God, and the effect of no common grace.

Without

Without the enjoyment of conſcience I can have no other.

The ſpirit in the children of God is like an organ; one man is one ſtop; another, another; the ſound is different, the inſtrument the ſame, but muſic in all.

Whatever oppoſes God in my heart, or keeps him out of it, muſt be abhorred and caſt out. The oppoſition is ſtrong, and the work difficult, and we ſee, at once, that it can only be done with divine help. It is the excellence of ſcripture to offer this help, and calls us to make uſe of it.

Head-knowledge is our own, and can poliſh only the outſide; heart-knowledge is the Spirit's work, and makes all glorious within. Nothing is well done in our ſpiritual building but what is done with prayer and God's help. Fight and pray. Fly and pray.

Thank God for laying his command on my heart, and for diſpoſing my heart to delight in it.

When we feel no burden, and complain of no want, but that of entire ſanctification, life will be a continual dying, and death welcome.

When we obey the will of God from the heart, we ſtand before him, as the angels do, in the original glory and full bleſſing of our natures; and ſo far as we come ſhort of this, we come ſhort of happineſs.

Is

Is this a dying thought?—All think they mean well; and by an egregious piece of ſelf-flattery, they take it for granted that our defect of good lies not in the will but the ability. Juſt the reverſe.—If the will is good we are good.

Purity of heart, mind, and conſcience is not freedom from temptation or total inſenſibility, but abſtinence from the outward act of ſin, and ſuppreſſion of all inward motions and tendencies to it, in the fear of God, and with a ſteady choice of his will. I ſhall be a happy man, with conſciouſneſs of help from above in anſwer to prayer, when I am determined at all events for the will of God: Shew me where the will of God is, I know where pleaſure is. Senſuality will not do, groſs or refined. Nothing can ſupport my ſpirits, or enable me to paſs through the world with any degree of conſtant ſatisfaction, but walking with God, in the faith of Chriſt, as a reconciled Father, doing his will, under his eye, with his help; acquieſcing in this ſtate of mind; looking no farther; deſiring no other riches; living for no other end.

If we long truly for God, he has given us a great deal in that longing; and if he makes us wait now for more, he will make us full amends hereafter. O Jeſus, call me to God by thy croſs, thy love, thy ſpirit, and then call me home.

Oh! for a ſteady will to think and do all with a ſole regard to the eye of God, and with great indifference

indifference for the eſteem or cenſure of any man living.

In caſe of ſin allowed, or weakly reſiſted, the conſcience will not be quieted with hopes and promiſes; no, nor with the blood of Chriſt.

The more faith, the leſs conſcience of ſin and leſs ſervile fear; the leſs conſcience of ſin, the more conſciouſneſs and lively ſenſibility of its odious, curſed nature.

Time flies faſt, but conſcience ſhould keep pace with it.

Decem. 28, 1763, Preſs on in the name and ſtrength of God to an aſſured victory.

The heart is due to God. O, what joy, eaſe, and freedom when I can ſay it is God's; for his love, for Chriſt's ſake, by the Spirit's power; no enjoyment but in God or God's work. O! for the pure heart and the ſingle eye.

It is an hard thing for a real Chriſtian, fearing and ſtriving againſt all ſin, to be patient with it, in ſubmiſſion to the Divine Will; but what can we do if God is pleaſed to ſuffer it in us, as he does for wiſe purpoſes; to humble us, to convince us of our dependence; to keep us cloſe to Chriſt; So St. Paul exulted in the grace of God, and could defy remaining corruption to condemn him, *Rom.* vii. The moment we think that we have no ſin, we ſhall deſert Chriſt.

We

We may know by our affection to the Sabbath, whether eternity will be forced upon us.

If it pleaſes God to endue me with ſpiritual wiſdom, I ſhall from henceforth pay a greater regard to the teaching of my Lord, and have no treaſure but in heaven, no heart but for heaven.

The great miſtake of life is ſelf-pleaſing, or looking for a ſtate of reſt and ſatisfaction here, not only in ſenſual gratification, but even in the way of religion, inſtead of taking up the croſs, labour in duty, and ſubmiſſion to the will of heaven; with a renunciation of all worldly ſchemes of happineſs, and patient waiting for death to put us in poſſeſſion of it. The only happineſs of this world is preparing for it in another, and being content without it till death.

To think and act, to be as much diſengaged in reſpect of N. N. and as neceſſarily drawn to ſeek happineſs elſewhere, as if there was no ſuch perſon in the world:—The work is great and the time is ſhort; but what cannot God do?

I never was happy till I knew that I could not be happy in this world, and conſented to wait for it till God's time and place: This thought will keep me from all ſelf-pleaſing in forbidden ways; reconcile me to ſufferings, croſſes, injuries, mortifications, and put a ſmile on the face of death.

Religion

Religion does not conſiſt in a point. The ſoul that has entered into the true ſpirit of it, is never ſatisfied with its attainments, but continually preſſes on to greater heights; and, notwithſtanding the greateſt abundance of graces received, is ſtill craving, thinks itſelf poor, and utterly unworthy of any reward. This is humility and poverty of ſpirit. Pride will carry a man to heaven's gate, but nothing but humility will find admiſſion.

"He that is not with me," ſays our Saviour, "is againſt me." Mere indifference to good, is evil.

The trueſt mortifications, and the ſureſt teſt of a real diſpoſition to be mortified, are thoſe which we receive from others, and from God. Self-mortification or croſſes of our own chooſing, are often only a more refined ſpecies of pride and ſelf-will.

The world ſlides into our hearts by the avenues of ſenſe, in caſes we little think of. There may be danger in giving ourſelves up fully to a warm ſunſhine, or the pleaſures of a beautiful landſcape. This may be thought moroſe indeed! But let the militant ſoul be upon its guard.

I may cheat myſelf and others with a counterfeit appearance of virtue; or rather keep under the contrary appearance by continual acts of violence; but the reality of it, and of all our graces, can only ſpring from a *nature*. Conſciouſneſs of our want of this nature, and ſenſible concern for it, is

the beginning of religion, or repentance; patient waiting upon God for it according to Chriſt, is the progreſs of religion, or faith and hope; and the actual receiving of it, is the end of religion or charity. The man who has the Spirit of God, and of Chriſt, is ſpiritual; redeemed; a chriſtian; the child of God; and has in him the nature and life of heaven and eternity. The man who has no other ſpirit than his own, though ever ſo learned, rational, and regular in his behaviour, is carnal, ſenſual, earthly; the child of death, and ſtands in the kingdom of darkneſs; the tree is corrupt and the fruit corrupt, tho' they appear ever ſo beautiful. This doctrine is of the very eſſence and life-blood of chriſtianity, and nothing can be plainer, or more full to the purpoſe than St. Paul's aſſertion, *Rom.* viii. 9. But it is a terrible myſtery to fleſhly wiſdom, and will for ever be the ſubject of debate and contradiction.

Sanctification is a gift; and the buſineſs of man is to deſire, receive, and uſe it. But he can by no act or effort of his own produce it in himſelf. Grace can do every thing; nature nothing.

When my appetite is weak, ſqueamiſh, or vitiated, I know it is a ſymptom of decay and bodily diſorder; and is it not the want or depravation of ſpiritual appetite the ſame indication of debility, and great diſorder in the ſoul?

In temporals, riches is power; in ſpirituals, poverty.

It

It is a terrible mortification to a ſerious man to find the evil ſpirit ſtill in poſſeſſion, after he had thought it entirely gone. But withal it affords a happy conviction of our impotence as well as inbred corruption, and will lead in time, with hearty repentance and true faith, to that friendly power, from whence cometh our help.

It is with the ſoul, as with the ſtomach; there muſt be a healthy conſtitution of both, to digeſt and aſſimulate their reſpective food.

Meekneſs of wiſdom compels where reaſon cannot perſuade.

When we quit our hold of the creature, and of earthly enjoyments, what is there left for us to ſtay upon? What can make us amends for the want of them? Is there any thing beſide that we can feel, reliſh, and feed upon with delight?—Yes; faith, hope, and charity. Theſe are a bleſſed ſource to the ſoul; and it is the choice and poſſeſſion of theſe that conſtitutes a chriſtian, and the chriſtian happineſs.

When we once come to know and believe in good earneſt, that there is a peace with God to be had, and that it is the very thing we want; it will make us cool in all other purſuits.

There is great folly and preſumption in comparing ourſelves with others, or deſpiſing any man. We may be worſe than others, when we

think ourſelves better: Poſſibly we neither know them nor ourſelves: If we are really better, the difference is not from ourſelves: And, whatever they may be, our own want of humility is certainly a moſt terrible defect.

I deſire the Spirit of God above and beyond all other poſſeſſions, intereſts, ſatisfactions, or enjoyments; both as a controuling principle, diſcernible in its effects, and enabling me to command myſelf and all my powers for God; and as a diſtinct inward feeling or conſciouſneſs and foretaſte of the heavenly happineſs. I think both are held forth in ſcripture, and one can hardly be without the other in any heart.

There is no poſſibility of happineſs but in the poſſeſſion of our own choice, will, and deſire: and the will of man, in his preſent condition, ſtands bent againſt the order and will of God. What is to be done? And whoſe will muſt be changed? The concurrence of our wills with the will of God is our rectitude and happineſs; their oppoſition, our corruption and miſery.

The firſt man fell by withdrawing his will from the will of God. By nature we ſtand in the ſame ſtate of ſeparation, and are perpetually acting his revolt over again, and can only be reſtored by the reduction of our wills to the order of God's.

Peace with God, and peace with all the world, and with all nature.—See *Hoſea* ii. 18. and the parallel places.

How

How happy is the ſoul that has got above the prevalence of earthly hopes and fears, deſires, and reliſhes, and can, upon good grounds, conſider itſelf as a child of God's family and kingdom; promoting its intereſts; partaking of its bleſſings; only influenced by its expectations; and waiting for death as the door of admiſſion to all its enjoyments.

If I give myſelf to the creature in any ſuch way as I know to be forbidden, I muſt not think that I can approach God, or that he will meet me in prayer, &c. Every attempt of that kind is an act of ſelf-deceit and hypocriſy.

Abſtaining from evil is nothing without an actual turning to God in Chriſt, and tending to him with the bent of my will and deſire, as the reſt, centre, and life of my ſpirit. This change conſtitutes the idea of religion, is the great work we have to tranſact with God, and ſhould be the baſis of all our prayers.

When once I am in Chriſt, as a living member of his body, and ſo joined to him as to be one ſpirit, I am (in a qualified ſenſe) what he was; have what he did; and ſhall be what he is.

Nothing but the poſſeſſion of our minds with our title to God's favour, and conſequently to a happy eternity, can make us deſire, and ſeek after it in good earneſt, and order all our affairs with a view to it. It is the great deſign of the chriſtian religion,

religion, and the peculiar tendency of its diſtinguiſhing doctrines, to poſſeſs and fill our minds with this perſuaſion.

Religion is ſeeking after the gracious preſence of God in the ſoul; and finding him there is ſalvation, or heaven begun. Thoſe who have experienced the two ſtates of nature and grace, know the difference to be as great as between heaven and earth.

With regard to what I read or think, the queſtion ſhould be, is it really intereſting? Will ſuch a ſpeculation improve me in religious knowledge, or bring me nearer to God? If it will not, diſcard it at once.

Holineſs is happineſs. They are to each other as cauſe and effect, and one neceſſarily produces the other; at leaſt more than any thing elſe can do. But what paſſes in the world for virtue, is an errant counterfeit. And I believe very few of thoſe who pretend to it, either expect or deſire to be any better for it inwardly.

Chriſt would be loved for all he did, and for all he is; and we cannot love him for one, without loving him for the other. The ſenſe of his benefits will be in proportion to the ſenſe we have of our own ſinfulneſs; which cannot be without an earneſt deſire to be delivered from it.

Seeking

Seeking after God for himſelf, is the renewed mind, the ſingle eye, the pure heart, the birth of the Spirit: Seeking after him for any thing but himſelf, is not ſeeking him ſincerely.

True goodneſs is univerſal and uniform, when it is God's life and nature in us; like God, without partiality or reſpect of perſons. No virtue merely human can ſtand this teſt.

He who can ſay "I am ſo weary of ſin, as to be weary of life, and even long to put off that fleſh which is the ſeat of it," ſays a great deal, tho' he may ſtill labour under many imperfections.

Never turn aſide from any command for the croſs that is in it, for that is the very thing that makes it a bleſſing, and the means of ſpiritual improvement. The Holy Ghoſt is moſt, if not only, a comforter, in the abſence or contempt of worldly comforts. It ſeems better to take the meaſure of our ſtate from a real change of deſires, and continual progreſs towards perfection, than any ſenſible communications, joyous feelings, or high raptures. When men are taught to expect theſe, as the great marks and ſeals of their adoption, the pride of ſome will ſoon help them to a competent ſhare of them; whilſt others, leſs bold, and not willing to outrun their own experience, will be thrown into grievous perplexities.

The new birth is our being received by the will of God into a new ſtate of being, by faith,

to

to the remiſſion of ſins; to a participation of Chriſt's perfect righteouſneſs, to a renovation of will by the Holy Ghoſt. And this life proves itſelf, as every other kind of life does, by its natural and proper acts; by contrition; by prayer; by love; and by a continual progreſs in holineſs. Spiritual comforts, if eagerly deſired, and reſted in, may keep us from God as well as earthly ones.

We greatly deceive ourſelvs by thinking we are and have what we know, or that we can be made wiſe and holy by other men's words and notions. Whereas all divine wiſdom and real ſanctity ariſes from within; from the Spirit of God working at the root, and is, by evolution, as a plant from its ſeed. Every ſtep we take higher in the kingdom of grace, we neceſſarily ſink ſo much lower in our own eſteem.

When I can bear oppoſition, calumny, contempt, hatred, and all manner of ill uſage, as infinitely leſs than my deſerts, I may poſſibly be meek; but not before. The religion of the goſpel is converſion by the power of God: Therefore, whatever is mere nature, or the effect of natural power, neceſſarily comes ſhort of it.

If we took but the ſame care of our inward diſpoſitions, from a ſenſe of God's preſence, as we do of our outward deportment before an earthly ſuperior, we ſhould ſoon be prepared for his moſt ſearching operations.

If

If I reſign myſelf to the Spririt, it muſt be with a full reſolution to do and ſuffer a great deal. He will not take me in hand upon any other terms.

Nothing can make life pleaſant, but ſome kind of acquieſcence in the preſent hour; from a conſciouſneſs that we are in it according to the order of God, either doing or ſuffering his will, or at leaſt not acting contrary to it.

It ſeems to be the great controverſy among the better ſort of people at all times, whether a decent moral life, together with a profeſſion of faith in Chriſt, and a regularity of outward worſhip, is the religion of the goſpel; or, a heart devoted to God, ſenſible of his communications, and inwardly changed in the bent of its deſires and affections; or, in other words, whether true religion is not altogether a work of God upon the ſoul, diſtinctly known and felt in its ſeveral ſtages of repentance, faith, and charity. The latter opinion is commonly called enthuſiaſm; but the former certainly is ſo; as being a falſe ground of truſt in God: But no man ever was deceived in the main by the other. He is, and has, all that religion requires of him, even though he ſhould be miſtaken in aſcribing too much to inward ſenſations and divine experiences.

One credible perſon ſteadily bearing teſtimony to the power of divine grace in his own converſion, will have a greater effect in converting others, than the moſt learned and eloquent declaration of

the ſame truth from a thouſand unconverted preachers. 1 *John* i. 1.

It is the worſt kind, and higheſt form of pride to think of being a chriſtian, or ſpiritual in any other way, or by any other means, than the poor-eſt and moſt illiterate man upon earth is, viz. by the ſole power of the Holy Ghoſt.

It will be a bleſſed time when I can go into all companies with the ſimplicity of a man in Chriſt; ſpeaking the truth in love, undauntedly, and yet fearful of offending.

Chriſtian morals, or rather renovation, is a glorious idea, and it fills one with rapture to think it is promiſed, and attainable, though not fully in this life.

What is misfortune? Whatever ſeparates us from God. What a bleſſing? Every means of approximation to him. No right opinions, clearneſs of comprehenſion, or fulneſs of belief in religious matters, ſignify any thing to our converſion and eſtabliſhment, unleſs they are from God.

The croſſes and mortifications we meet with from others are a precious means of humbling, inſtructing, and improving us; we ſhould be undone without them. Madame Guyon carries this ſo far as to ſay, That if we had no body about us to plague and vex us, God would ſend an angel from heaven to do it.

With

With the help of God, I will neither ſuffer the devil to lurk behind the croſs, nor hide it from me.

What will it profit me to be always thinking of Chriſt, and forming acts of reſignation to him, but never doing any thing for him?

The Spirit does not only confer and increaſe ability, and ſo leave us to ourſelves in the uſe of it; but every ſingle act of ſpiritual life is the Spirit's own act in us.

I am reſolved, with the grace of God, to forgive every body every thing, and myſelf nothing.

Is what I know and feel of ſpiritual things the reſult of a new nature, or of the old only under a different form, and feeding upon different comforts?

O! what ſhifts, what multiplicity of miſerable inventions, to quiet the poor ſoul, and create to ourſelves the paradiſe we have loſt, in ſome kind or other of a worldly life! When it can only be regained in God, and in the full reſtoration of the heart to him in love and obedience through Chriſt.

We can never arrive at any true ſettlement, by propping ourſelves up with the opinions or experiences of others. Reſt muſt be the reſult of our own fellowſhip with God. Our religion for the

moſt part is nothing but the Prophet Jeremiah's ſtolen words. *Jer.* xxiii. 30.

"Thou art my portion, O Lord!" Behold here the teſt of rectitude, of happineſs, of a chriſtian. Speak this truly, O my heart, and all that is within me, or I am undone for ever.

Whenever I learn of Chriſt to be meek and lowly in heart, ſurely I ſhall ſay, "whence is this to me, that my Lord ſhould come to me!"

Paſſion coſts me too much to beſtow it upon every trifle.

Be it ever remembered as the ground of all true converſion, a truth of the utmoſt importance in religion, neceſſary to cauſe us to aim our endeavours aright, and fix us in faith, humility, and dependence on God, that the eſſence of happineſs is not actions, but affections. Actions will follow affections, but without them are wholly inſignificant to our cure. Conſider well, *Matt.* v. 3—10. *Rom.* ii. 28, 29.—1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, 3. I have a very diſtinct feeling and apprehenſion how the mental vices of pride, envy, and wrath war againſt the ſoul; and that ſo long as they are predominant, it muſt neceſſarily be in a ſickly, ſelf-tormented ſtate: But then I have not the ſame conſciouſneſs with regard even to the groſſeſt kinds of ſenſual indulgence. God knows how they would hurt me, tho' I do not. Here reaſon is at a ſtand, and faith muſt do its office. Perhaps 1 *Cor.* vi. 13—20 would

help me to a right underſtanding of this matter, if I could come at the meaning of it.

Every man ſhould be a ſun in his little ſphere; merely a creature of divine goodneſs, manifeſting God's glory, and ſhining without merit.

Chriſtian holineſs, that which God requires of us, and offers to us, is health to the ſoul, and would do us good; the virtue we generally acquieſce in, and prefer to it, is a poor thing, and leaves us juſt where it finds us, in point of happineſs.

I can never be in union with God, till I ſtand before him without guile, according to the truth of my ſtate: If it is bad, in confeſſion and humiliation; if good, in thankfulneſs, deſire of improvement and humiliation ſtill for the imperfection of it.

God deliver me from ſin, and give me the deſire of perfect purity, and let happineſs come when it may! Peace outſtripping real attainments, is dangerous preſumption. The truly humble man is humble in ſecret; it is a pain to him to have his humility ſeen and obſerved; and whenever he has occaſion to confeſs his defects, it is for no other end but to take ſhame to himſelf.

Let us put ourſelves fully into the hands of God once for all; not only conſcious of our weakneſs, and ſo ſubmitting to his power, becauſe we cannot

cannot help it; chooſing and preferring to receive all our ſtrength of him, rather than to have it in and of ourſelves, if we might; to have the root of our ſpiritual life in him, to be actuated by his power, and bleſſed with his happineſs. Methinks we may ſee ſomething of the fall of Lucifer, and the ſin of the firſt man, in the contrary diſpoſition. The creature is not fit to be truſted with ſelf-ability; pride is inſeparable from it, and puffs it up ſufficiently, even with a derived power, ſeen and acknowledged to be ſuch. The great St. Paul wanted a thorn in the fleſh.

If we were at peace within, external things would have but little power to hurt us.

If God gives internal comfort, it is not that we may live upon it, but to ſupport and animate us to ſome farther end.

Have I a diſtinct inward conſciouſneſs of a real deſire to be with God; of ſuch a preference of the heavenly to the earthly ſtate, and ſuch a fitneſs for it, as that if it was offered to my choice this moment, I ſhould find myſelf carried thither by a centripetal force, and ruſh into it with joy and tranſport?

Let others think as ill of me as they pleaſe, provided I do not think too well of myſelf.

We ſhould conceive of time and eternity as different periods of the ſame ſtate, or different degrees

grees of the ſame kind of life, requiring the ſame diſpoſitions, but always improving; and not as ſeparated by a great gulph, and quite different from each other in their intereſts, pleaſures, and employments. This would be running time into eternity, and bringing eternity down to time: We ſhould then think and act like eternal beings, and live here as we are to do in heaven. Let the whole world therefore be divided into two great ſects, viz. *Timiſts* and *Eternaliſts*.

To-day's duty is no diſcharge for to-morrow: Every day has its own peremptory demand upon us, not only for repetition but advancement. It is a ſaying of St. Baſil, that the ſoul would ſtarve, as well as the body, without a continual renewal of its proper food; and St. Paul's motto in the midſt of ſuch a courſe of labour and activity as would quite have ſunk the ſpirits of another man was, forward.

I can never bear to be found fault with, or thought meanly of by others, unleſs I am beforehand with them, in thinking meanly of myſelf.

I find I owe meekneſs, tranquillity, patience, &c. to my body as well as to my ſoul.

We expect ſubmiſſion and amendment from the wrong perſon: We ſhould expect them from ourſelves.

Have

Have a work to do daily, with a will to it, and a prayer upon it, and let that work be God's.

Submiſſion to the will of God once for all; and then I ſhall have my own every day and hour of my life.

There can be no true peace with God without faithfulneſs in duty, and a reſolute abhorrence of all ſin.

Whatever good qualities you have, deſire not to have them ſeen, unleſs it be for the benefit of others, and to bring glory to the author of them. Be as good, and do as much good as ever you can, and give the pride of it to the devil.

Time can only be made happy, as eternity will be, by our living for and with God; not grudgingly, or barely from a ſenſe of duty in obedience to a command; but freely and with delight, as the very thing we chooſe, and are carried to with the bent of our nature.

I am reſolved to receive my virtue from God as a gift, inſtead of preſenting him with a ſpurious kind of my own.

Till we do our duty to God, we can never do it to man. And what we do to others will be more from ſpurious motives, than ſenſe of duty or religion in the heart.

"The

"The meek ſhall inherit the earth." Whatever other ſenſe the words may have, they are certainly true in this, that the meek have much more enjoyment of themſelves, and paſs more quietly thro' the world, whatever is their lot in it, than other men. What would the greateſt affluence ſignify to a man's happineſs, if he had it with this condition, to receive one or more wounds with a ſword every day of his life? Pride and paſſion are that ſword.

I am under a ſtrict bond to Jeſus, to receive the rule of right from him in all caſes, and act agreeably to it.

The heart can only be happy according to its bent, and in the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of what it loves. All therefore depends upon the choice it makes of its object; and there is but one we can think of, which, for power, fulneſs, and continuance, is ſufficient for its happineſs.

I would not exchange the little faint efforts I can make towards praiſing God for all worldly comforts.

A tender conſcience is an ineſtimable bleſſing; that is, not only quick to diſcern what is evil, but inſtantly to ſhun it, as the eye-lid cloſes itſelf againſt a mote.

A lively ſenſe of God's mercy in Chriſt, and love in the heart; is not this the Spirit's baptiſm

of fire? And what have I to do in the world but to get and keep it?

What God commands I will do; what he forbids I will not do. This may be hard work, and a croſs to ſelf; but if I am not thus diſpoſed and reſolved once for all, where is my obedience, and what leſs than this can be called ſincerity?

God has only one way of bringing all to himſelf; viz. by martyrdom, or the crucifixion of our wills.

So long as the animal ſenſual nature is predominant, we can only amuſe ourſelves with one opinion after another, but never come to the truth.

I did not know how much I was given up to earthly comforts, till they were taken from me, and I was reduced to the neceſſity of living upon God.

Now for a ſingle eye and a pure heart! now there ſeems to be an opening to the happy time of forſaking all! It is only a glimpſe; but if I keep my attention fixed upon it, it will bring me full into the light.

There is a kind of almightineſs in the will to reject ſin, whenever it pleaſes to do its office; as it infallibly always would, if it was ſo free as is commonly imagined. It ſeems to me that the great change,

change, which the ſcripture calls regeneration, or renewal to the image of God, is ſetting the will at liberty to execute his commands, who gave it us, and who does nothing without it.

The Spirit plies his office with great aſſiduity and divine art; preſſing to be heard, waiting for the favourable ſeaſon, and always ready to improve it.

A fall is God's advantage as well as the devil's; and as we incline to one or the other, we may riſe higher from it, or fall ſtill lower.

The more I increaſe in notions only, the more guilt of knowledge and pride of heart.

It will be well with me when perfection is the great purpoſe of my life, ruling paſſion and wiſh of my heart, and I direct my efforts towards it, and grieve as much for coming ſhort of it, as natural or worldly men do when they are perpetually croſſed and hindered in the darling object of their purſuit.

There is no happineſs but in perfection, conſequently not in this world; for the nearer we come to it, the more we grieve for coming ſhort of it.

God made us for eternity, and his aim in all he does, is to bring us happily to it. Hence the neceſſity of pain, ſickneſs, croſſes, to break the ſtrong chain which binds us to the world, and

force us to take part with God in his grand deſign.

Every man might be more uſeful and happy than he is, if he would be contented to be about one thing.

Better give my heart to God late than never; better by force, or the loſs of earthly comforts, than not at all.

If I was to give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, Chriſt would ſay to me, "this is not the ſacrifice I want; give up that darling luſt; give up every ſin; give up thy will; ſacrifice thyſelf to be as a whole burnt-offering in the fire of love, and for joy of my ſalvation."

The "Poor in ſpirit"—are thoſe who deſire no earthly diſtinction, covet no earthly riches, are thankful for what they have, and think it more than they deſerve.

Deſired to pay my ſubſcription to the county hoſpital. God's demand is upon the heart, for love, for cheerfulneſs in giving, for activity in doing good, for a great deal more than I do, for ſingleneſs and purity in all things, and all for Chriſt's ſake.

When frames are high, ſelf is high, pride is high, and faith often at the loweſt. When frames are

are low, faith is not therefore high, but ſelf may be as ſtrong as ever, and only reſtleſs and troubled for the want of its ſole ſupport.

The will of God is my life, and dearer to me than life. If I do not ſtand to this, I am undone.

Converſion is, when the longing of the ſoul is no longer to ſenſual gratifications, or worldly abundance, but ſimply and purely to heavenly things; ſo that when the queſtion is aſked, wherein do I ſeek for reſt, ſatisfaction, and enjoyment? The heart can anſwer at once, in communion with God, thro' Chriſt, by the Spirit.

We are perfect, not by arriving at a certain point of perfection, but by always going on; as a traveller is equally perfect in every ſtep of his journey, who knows his way, and proceeds in it without ſtopping.

One ſenſible, experimental proof of Chriſt's power and preſence in time of conflict, of danger, or temptation, will hardly ever be forgotten, and binds the ſoul to him in truſt and affiance more than a thouſand arguments.

God cannot be enjoyed but as he is loved, nor loved but as he is known, nor known but by Chriſt, nor by Chriſt but as revealed to the heart by the Spirit.

Actions, affections, paſſions, flowing from religion as a *nature*, are a ſource of happineſs to ourſelves and others; but the contrary, when religion is ſubmitted to as a taſk, and no love and purity in the heart.

We have time enough to prepare for eternity, and ſhould be thankful that we have none to ſpare.

We cannot enjoy both God and ſin. It is the curſe of nature, and horrible corruption to chooſe the latter.

I ſee plainly why I am no better; it is becauſe I do not live more upon Chriſt. The more I poſſeſs and enjoy his love, the more I ſhall ſtudy to pleaſe and be like him.

The journey thro' life is as Peter's walking on the water; and if Chriſt does not reach out his hand, we are every moment in danger of ſinking.

He is a happy man who is never angry; next to him is he whoſe anger immediately recoils upon himſelf for being angry.

He who is heartily troubled for his anger in godly repentance, and earneſtly ſtriving againſt it, is, perhaps, a more virtuous man than he who, from natural meekneſs of temper, is ſeldom or never angry.

Nature

Nature ſays, if I may not ſin, let me die; grace ſays, let me die rather than ſin.

The chriſtian draws nigh to God as a reconciled father in the faith of Chriſt; preſſes on to a complete victory over ſin, and the glory of the inward man in a pure and perfect heart. God today: And what to-morrow? God.

Thankful for Chriſt, thankful for every thing, and always in a ſerene quiet ſtate of mind.

It is a great paradox, but glorious truth of chriſtianity, that a good conſcience may conſiſt with a conſciouſneſs of evil.

The goſpel precepts, or morality, are not regulated in the manner of Socrates, Plato, &c. but delivered to us on the authority of God; and receiving them as ſo delivered, is not only a better ſecurity againſt miſtake than reaſon can be in its moſt improved ſtate; but our rectitude in the ſight of God, and the higheſt excellence of which the ſoul of man is capable, as being the teſt of its obedience and ſubmiſſion to the ſovereign and only perfect will.

"No man when he hath lighted a candle putteth it under a buſhel." "From him that hath not, ſhall be taken even that which he hath." Let me not think that God hath given me abilities which he hath not, or be unthankful for what he does give, or ſuffer them to lie dead upon

on my hands, or take the glory of them to myſelf, or envy others for having more, or deſpiſe any for having leſs.

I ſhould be as thankful for every morſel I eat, as if I was periſhing with hunger, and it was brought to me by a miracle; thus, indeed, it is by a great many.

I ſhall be as happy as it is poſſible to be on this ſide the grave, when I have a clear perception that divine things are preferred in my eſteem to all others, and have taken ſuch poſſeſſion of my ſoul that I ſettle upon them with full acquieſcence; not looking for reſt and ſatisfaction from ſenſual gratifications, worldly proſpects, or comforts of any kind; but ſolely in communion with God, and enjoying myſelf day by day in doing his work, in the reliſh I have for ſpiritual exerciſes, and a diligent preparation for eternity. O bleſſed Spirit, clear up this idea to my mind, and by thy effectual operation make it life and power in my heart.

The earth would be ſtill a praradiſe, if we had the art of enjoying it, and did not turn it into a curſe to ourſelves by our ſins and paſſions.

It is hardly worth while to be happy for the ſhort time of life. If you muſt needs be at pains about it, let your firſt efforts be to find out the men who can tell you what happineſs is. He is the leaſt unhappy, who makes leaſt account of happineſs

happineſs in this world; puts himſelf in God's way to it, patiently waits his time for it, and can ſee a ſmile on the face of death.

The beſt thing we can do in the want of love, is to endeavour, under a ſenſe of duty, to do as nearly as poſſibly what love would.

Chriſt's ſervice, and the appertinents of God's worſhip, are the enjoyment of the day, the ſeaſoning of life, the ſoul's feaſt and proper nouriſhment.

No compenſation, commutation, or ſubſtitute of any kind will be allowed inſtead of a renewed will, and unreſerved obedience from a pure heart. Be entire with God, O my ſoul! come full into the joy of a pure heart, an obedient will, and upright conſcience. Never ſet a foot forward without making it a ſtep to the New Jeruſalem. I ſhall have brought all to a happy concluſion, when God has full poſſeſſion of my heart.

A perſon who has taken goſpel-truths into his mind and heart, and can think with well-grounded hope and pleaſing expectation on the joys of believers, will have but little reliſh for Homer, Virgil, Horace, Tully, &c.

If you would be humble, and know what you want Chriſt for, never think how much you have done, but how much you have left undone. On the other hand, make not what Chriſt has done for you a pretence for doing leſs than you might.

Happineſs is not here; it cannot be found in the way of nature, ſadly corrupt and diſordered; and nature will have its ſhare of the man, in ſpite of all his efforts to diſpoſſeſs it.

The heart is to the ſoul what the ſtomach is to the body; a good or bad conſtitution reſulting to and from each reſpectively.

In all events and occurrences, trials and croſſes, I would go to Chriſt for advice, and power to act according to it.

On earth, prayer, improvement, waiting; in heaven, praiſe, perfection, happineſs.

Live with God now, as you expect and wiſh to live with him for ever, in holy fear, pure love, and the perfection of an obedient will. It is an awful thing to die, more or leſs as we make it an awful thing to live.

Thoſe who magnify the preſent comforts of religion, and embrace it chiefly as a means of happineſs in this world, are only ſenſualiſts in diſguiſe, and ſure to be diſappointed.

A good man loves goodneſs in the abſtract, for its own ſake, in others as well as himſelf, in God tranſcendently.

God will not ſuffer the world to ſmile upon his ſervants, leſt they ſhould fall in love with it.

The

The man who knows his buſineſs in the world, and has his eye fixed upon his beſt intereſt, can welcome pain, croſſes, paſſion, hatred.

When ſhall I be pleaſed with myſelf? Never, till I am pleaſed with God.

"Followers of them, who, by faith and patience, inherit the promiſes." If we are chriſtians, we ſhall believe, deſire, and long for the promiſes; and as ſurely as we deſire them, we ſhall prepare for them in God's way.

Engaging in religion merely for the preſent comfort and ſatisfaction of it, or becauſe it is the happieſt kind of life, is doing it upon a miſtaken motive; and if our expectations are not anſwered to the full, we ſhall grow weary of it, and fly to ſomething elſe. It ſhould be for eternity; and then we ſhall be ſet free from worldly deſires, ſupported with hope, refuſe no hardſhips, wait patiently, and continue ſtedfaſt to the end.

Every ſpiritual perſon at times is lively, and feels a glow at his heart, in the exerciſe of faith, prayer, meditation, and reading the ſcripture; but though he has the ſame will and deſire, yet, in ſpite of all his efforts, is oftener dull, cold, and unaffected. I can account for this no way, but by the Spirit's agency and preſence at one time more than another; becauſe in other intellectual acts and appearances it is not ſo. Whatever ſcience a man is in purſuit of, the mind is ready at

his call, though not always with the ſame vigour, yet with very little variation or interruption.

It is ſomething to make the thought of Chriſt's preſence a check to every thought, word, and deed. But ſtill it is only being an eye-ſervant. Would I do and forbear the ſame things for his ſake, and out of pure love to his commands, if I knew he did not ſee me?

When time is devoted to God, we ſhall have enough for all other uſes.

"Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;"—abſtracted from the world, its intereſts and pleaſures, ſingly and purely devoted to God, and the purſuit of heavenly things; determined for all duty and againſt all ſin. "That Chriſt may dwell in my heart by faith"—the joy and the Lord of my heart; the ſweetneſs and the drawing of my heart; the cordial and the life of my heart; ſo lovely and ſo beloved, that I had rather die than diſpleaſe him. "My heart is fixed;"—to have no temptation, or evil luſting, I cannot ſay; not to yield to it, or fall by it, I muſt ſay.

I am ſenſible that the Spirit will bring me under a ſevere diſcipline, and carry on his work according to the rule of ſcripture, without allowance of one ſin, or diſpenſing with any one command. Am I in his hands for ſuch a work as this, and does he ſay Amen to it in my heart?

If

If deſire of regeneration, and perſevering prayer for it, is not a proof of faith, it will be hard to find a man who can give a better.

Get a ſtep towards heaven; endeavour to maſter ſome evil temper, and break looſe from ſome worldly tie every day. Victory over one ſin upon right grounds, will pave the way to an eaſy conqueſt of all.

If I was to begin my life again, what would I do? Live to God, or myſelf? Do I now ſee the amiableneſs, excellence, and neceſſity of ſuch a diſpoſition? What then is my preſent determination?

What does it ſignify where I am, or what can I want, if I advert always to the preſence of God; ſee him in every thing; find him in my heart; and have no deſign in the world but of living to his will; nor expectation of reſt and enjoyment but in communion with him?

My reſt is not here, either in reſpect of outward things, or the inward ſtate of my mind.

If I do not enjoy the will of God, I ſhall have no enjoyment of any thing elſe. I may have comfort for the remainder of life, if I can but come to a reſolution of giving up all other comforts and enjoyments for the will of God.

Conqueſt

Conqueſt of temptation, deliverance from the power of evil habits, and a ready compliance with the will of God, in anſwer to prayer, is a much better proof of his favourable preſence than joyous feelings. The latter may be miſtaken; but the former are as ſure a mark of the divine operation and bleſſing, as that a plentiful crop of corn has had the benefit of rain and ſunſhine.

Senſible communications may be, and are, often withheld from the beſt of men; the better they are, the more they deſire perfect conformity to the will of God as their portion and happineſs.

Happy man! when that hallelujah is the experience of my ſoul, "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

My cure is in the hands of God, and I muſt not ſet him a time, but pray earneſtly, and wait patiently for its coming.

God helps us in the way of our own wills, and we are never helped internally till they are in union with the commandment. It is a glorious ſtate, and happy proof of our renovation, when we ſtand firm on God's ſide againſt temptation.

How happy ſhall I be in the full deſire, Oh! how happy in the full experience of the grace and power of Chriſt!

"As

"As yet hardeneſt thou thyſelf againſt me, that thou wilt not let ſin go?" See the hiſtory of Pharaoh.

The ſoul cannot poſſibly be in a ſtate of indifference; it muſt have a prevailing, ſupreme regard to ſome object or other as its ſupport. The great intereſting queſtion is, God or ſenſuality? If there is not a clear, poſitive determination for the former, the latter is proved upon us at once.

We miſcarry ſadly in our religious progreſs by attempting the hardeſt things firſt. It is our duty to praiſe God, and happy is the ſoul that can do it; but it is a vain thing in the mouths of thoſe who have not yet learned to have patience with him.

A plant muſt be ſet in the earth, and have rain and ſunſhine. This is the very caſe of the ſoul's implantation into Chriſt, and growth by him.

We could be well enough content to be rid of ſome particular ſpiritual diſorders, and perhaps may be earneſt in prayer for it; but this is wretched tampering with a mortal diſeaſe, and in this way we ſhall always be unhelped. Chriſt's method of healing is to ſtrike at the conſtitution of ſin, by going to the root of the diſtemper, and we never can perſuade him to begin his work at the wrong end.

Communion with God can only be upon God's terms, by a perfect ſurrender of myſelf, all I have and am; my underſtanding, heart, will, conſcience, affections, ſtate, and life, to know, do, ſuffer, and be whatever he pleaſes. God's victory is in and over the heart. Being good is a different thing from doing good, and much harder.

That any man's thoughts are raiſed heavenwards, and his affections ſet on things above, is as much from the Spirit's agency, and by as great a miracle, as if his body was to riſe up into the air.

A little farther from ſin, and a little nearer to God, day by day.

The comfort of the Holy Ghoſt is, firſt, his eſtabliſhing us in the faith of Jeſus Chriſt; that thro' him we have forgiveneſs of ſins, and in him are made the righteouſneſs of God, and heirs of everlaſting life: And, ſecondly, his working repentance, uniting us to the will of God, and renewing us to his image in love. The firſt is our chief comfort here; the latter is only a begun ſtate, and will be our glory and never-ending happineſs in heaven.

Grieve for nothing but ſin, and for not grieving for it enough: Rejoice only in Chriſt's victory over it, recovery to God by him, and pure devotion to him. Oh! that I may from henceforth think with horror, aſtoniſhment of ſoul, and the moſt

moſt perfect deteſtation, of indulging a wiſh, or keeping any thing in my heart that would keep God out of it. I hope I ſhall make a choice; and I know what it muſt be, God and his will, Chriſt and his work, the Spirit and his baptiſm of fire. 1 Sam. vi. 12. "And the kine took the ſtraight way to the way of Beth-ſhemeſh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went; and turned not aſide to the right hand or to the left:" Juſt ſo I ſhould do, go ſtraight forward, againſt nature, by a divine impulſe into God's land.

Every temptation is an opportunity of getting nearer to God.

Cleave to the will of God, and turn with it conſtantly, as the weather-cock does with the wind.

What is the great ſingle object, the ſole end I live for, and keep conſtantly in view? Is it heaven, in the way of duty and labour, whatever it coſts? or a ſcheme of ſome kind or other for preſent gratification, terminating in this world? that is, in St. Paul's words, "making proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof," no matter how decently and reputably.

The ſoul is like the earth, ſometimes green and ſpringing, at other times dry and withering; both powerleſs in themſelves, and neither of them fruitful without a proper cultivation on the part of man.

"Let us follow his example, and offer his price, and take his wages, and expect his reward."

ST. AUGUSTINE.

The Chriſtian ſays, Wherever I ſee the will of God, my own is determined at once; I account all hardſhips light for the joy I have in it, and oppoſition to it, hell.

I never look upon a dead corpſe, and yet my ſoul, perhaps, muſt one day behold my own. What an awful moment! how happy will be the ſight if ſoul and body have lived together for eternity! how dreadful, if they have not! and what a call is there in this thought to make ſure of rejoicing then!

When my nature is renewed, I ſhall be in renewed nature; ſee the world, and every thing belonging to it, in a new light, and have one foot in Paradiſe reſtored.

Confeſs your ſins, and pray, as if it was to be the laſt time.

I ſhall never be any thing till I know I am nothing; leave it to God to make me what he pleaſes, and ſeek no praiſe or worldly advantages inordinately for myſelf. If I am in union with the will of God, I ſhall ſee it, and advert to his preſence in every thing, and bleſs him for every thing, wind and weather, croſſes, ſickneſs, death; and, what is the hardeſt of all, I ſhall do it in health and proſperity.

If

If I was told that I muſt be ten feet high to get to heaven, what ſhould I do? uſe means, and ſtrive hard to ſtretch myſelf up to the meaſure, or pray? The holineſs required of me is as much out of my power, and as much the work of another hand. Men may counterfeit it; but to be real, it muſt be infuſed or created. In this point we grievouſly miſtake, or overlook, both ſcripture and experience.

Life has its enjoyments, and is not the contemptible thing we make it, but heaven upon earth, when it is conducted upon right principles, directed to a right end, and devoted to the will of God. What would we have more, when the way to heaven is through heaven? If quiet paſſions, regular deſires, contented minds, pure wills, well-grounded hopes, holy longings, happy foretaſtes, communion with God, and reconciliation to death can make it ſo.

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,"—by adverting continually to his preſence with reverence and godly fear; conſidering him as always looking upon the heart; truſting on his Almighty protection; believing in him as a holy, ſin-hating God, and reconciled to ſinners of mankind only in Jeſus Chriſt; valuing his favour above all the world, and making it the ſettled, ſole aim of our lives to approve ourſelves to his pure eyes.

If I was in union with the will of God, I ſhould ſee whatever befals me as ſtamped with it, and be

always in a ſtate of enjoyment, as having the very thing I deſire.

"He that forſaketh not all that he hath;"—all he deſires, loves, and is by nature; all his worldly poſſeſſions and enjoyments, ſo as to be ſeparated from them in heart and affection, and clearly reſolved to follow Chriſt, coſt what it will; renounces his reaſon, powers, and tendencies, as truly inſufficient to make his peace with God, and conduct him to happineſs, "cannot," ſays Chriſt, "be my diſciple."

We do not ſo much as purpoſe to do the will of God, till we purpoſe to do it fully. Obedience is doing the will of God, becauſe it is his will, and not only ſo far as I ſee the fitneſs of it; or as it falls in with my own way of pleaſing myſelf.

Paul ſaid, "I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection:"—if the word *ſoul* was put inſtead of body, it would ſuit the generality much better.

God is the Lord of my will, not ſin, not the world, not the fleſh, not the devil; God is the great object of my affections; the joy of my life; the portion and ſtrength of my heart; the centre and reſt of my ſoul, to whom all my deſires tend, and with whom only I am at home. Lord give me power to ſay this, and deal with me as thou pleaſeſt.

Begin the chriſtian race from the croſs, and whenever you faint or grow weary, look back to it.

O,

O, for the Spirit's ſenſe of ſin! the Spirit's ſight of Chriſt! the Spirit's work of obedience!

It is a great thing to ſay, "My will is God's;" but greater to ſay, "My heart is God's:" Lord, have mercy on me, and help me in both; for it is only by thee that I can obey and love.

Be ſure that you are in God's hands to deal with you as he pleaſes; and then deſire nothing, either in temporals or ſpirituals, but what he orders.

One great miſtake of life is looking to the clouds for happineſs, inſtead of looking above them. The moment I forget God, or ceaſe adverting to his preſence, I forget myſelf.

When I fear the diſpleaſure of God; ſeek his favour; ſet him always before me; delight in his preſence; love his will; and make the eternal enjoyment of him the hope and great wiſh of my ſoul, I ſhall know as certainly that my nature is changed by power from above, as that I did not make myſelf.

I read that "ſuch an one renounced the errors of Popery at ſuch a time and place:"—Have I renounced the errors of a ſinful life, and all ſin, as ſin?

"Mens ſana in corpore ſano;" that is, "a ſound mind in a healthy body," was a good Pagan prayer;

prayer; but the Chriſtian's wiſh is, a right mind; let it fare with the body how it will.

We are never ſo near ſitting down in the loweſt room, as when we know aſſuredly that we are not in it.

CHAP. X.

CHARITY.

I Muſt love and honour all men notwithſtanding their vileneſs and corruption; and though I have reaſon to think, from what I know of myſelf, that they are much worſe than they ſeem to be.

To leave off ſinning, is charity of the beſt kind to my neighbours.

If you would come any thing near happineſs upon earth, endeavour to live with all mankind in a ſtate of as pure love as you will in heaven. Dr. Young ſays, "to have no one to whom we heartily wiſh well, and for whom we are warmly concerned, is a deplorable ſtate:"—but to have an univerſal tender feeling of love for mankind, as Chriſt had; and to regard every man as a brother, with the kindneſs of real affection, as chriſtians are exhorted to do, is certainly much better than a ſtate of natural partial love to ſome few particulars. Is this poſſible? Will it be granted to prayer?

We

We cannot love others in a right manner, without firſt loving God.

If my ſubſtance increaſes, wo be to me if all who have a claim upon me are not the richer for it.

Never rebuke any man without praying for him.

No faith, no quickening, no renovation, no liking of Chriſt without the love of ſouls.

If I hate any one, I love none truly.

Look upon every perſon you meet or converſe with as one for whom Chriſt died; and this will not only keep you from all injury, but engage you to all acts and endeavours of love to the ſouls and bodies of all.

The way never to ſpeak of any with contempt, is never to think of any with contempt.

The farther a man advances in chriſtianity, the more he ſees of the ignorance, ſelfiſh baſeneſs, and corrupion of mankind; and yet the more he loves them. The wiſdom from above can account for this ſeeming impoſſibility.

If I aim at the real ſpiritual improvement of thoſe I converſe with, I ſhall never ſay any thing to irritate or vex them, but keep a conſtant guard upon

upon myſelf; and if it ſhall pleaſe God to work mightily upon this paſſionate haughty ſpirit of mine, be gentle towards all men, notwithſtanding the greateſt provocations

It is a great fault, even of good men, to expect that others ſhould be convinced of, and brought to own the truth all at once, and perhaps to be angry if they are not: Neither conſidering how difficult it is for ſuch a blind and proud creature as man to ſee the truth and own his miſtakes; nor by what ſlow degrees they arrived at it themſelves. Little good comes by diſputing. Pride is generally at the bottom of it, and not charity, or the love of truth; and it is ſeldom managed with decency and candour enough to produce any good effect. Let fall a word in ſeaſon, and wait in patience till the rain drops upon it from heaven.

Tho' St. Paul, in 1 *Cor.* xiii. deſcribes charity only by its effects, as exerted towards men; yet the eſſence of charity and the root and cauſe of theſe effects is, and muſt be, the love of God. Man in his natural ſtate may love ſome few particulars, and thoſe perhaps not diſintereſtedly; but he cannot love man as ſuch, or the human nature in general, till he himſelf is transformed into the divine.

If we are truly foremoſt in the chriſtian courſe, there will be no triumphing, or carrying ourſelves aloft upon it; we ſhall be heartily ſorry to ſee others ſo far behind us.

I do not know that any pagan writer ever mentions or recommends, what Chriſt calls the firſt and great commandment; viz. the love of God: And yet this is the grand duty of man to his Maker; the baſis and eſſence of virtue; and the grand means of happineſs; when this is wanting, all our performances, how ſpecious ſoever, are not only uncomfortable and unacceptable, but ſinful.

It is a matter of no ſmall difficulty to be ſilent with reaſon on our ſide. And yet, for peace ſake, and the preſervation of decorum, or what is more eſſential, of charity and tranquillity, it is for the moſt part neceſſary to acquieſce, even in things of ſome conſequence; how much more in trifles, and matters of ordinary converſation.

When any one is diſcompoſed, and peeviſh for nothing or mere trifles, I ſee immediately the odiouſneſs of ſuch a temper, and the weakneſs of mind it proceeds from. Perhaps it will be my turn to-morrow. Let it be a rule with me upon ſuch occaſions to do all I can to heal and ſoften, and never to irritate; and eſpecially to guard againſt the infection of the diſorder, and hatred of the perſon.

Liking and eſteeming others merely for their agreement with us in religion, opinion, and manner of living, is only a leſs-offenſive kind of ſelf-adoration.

Speaking ill of others at all, unleſs it be to prevent miſchief to religion or our neighbour, is only for the ſake of tickling ourſelves, and thoſe that hear us, with a compariſon; proceeds from pride; and has no other tendency but to increaſe it.

I can love nothing as I ought, till I love every thing in God.

In caſe of peeviſhneſs, ill-nature, and unreaſonable paſſion in others, if it is poſſible, be unmoved; be gentle and compaſſionate; give place to wrath; do not irritate; try to ſoften; and ſympathize not at any rate.

Love will fill up and ſweeten all our time.

A true chriſtian cannot bear the thought of going to heaven alone.

The ſtricteſt obſervation of the law, from ſlaviſh fear, or other ſpurious motives, never worked any man one jot nearer to heaven. Without a true hearty principle of love and obedience to God, we are as much out of his way of happineſs, as utterly unqualified for it, and as deſtitute of real goodneſs, as if we lived in the known continual breach of all the commandments.

Muſt no one hope for the favour of God, till he has attained to the perfection of charity, as deſcribed by St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* xiii? Or does he ſet charity

charity before us in its full dimenſions to humble us, to ſhew us the greatneſs of our imperfection; to ſend us to Chriſt for remiſſion, and the gift of the Spirit; to lay in us the foundation of that divine grace, which muſt be begun here, but can only be perfected hereafter? *Martin Luther* is poſitive for the latter, *ad Gal.* p. 833.

If any man takes a tenth, or a fifth part from his ſtock, to give to the poor, the remainder will be a weightier ſeed for producing an increaſe, than if the whole had been untouched. But then this is a delicate affair. To give, chiefly with an expectation of the increaſe, is traffick, and not charity.

Self neither can, nor perhaps ought to be totally excluded from religion: But where it is the great motive, can there be any religion?

If I had no other end in view in adviſing or ſpeaking my ſentiments, than merely the good of others, I ſhould never do it with any degree of paſſion.

The deſire and love of God is, in proportion to the greatneſs and reality of it, the extinction of all falſe deſires, and conſequently of diſobedience.

The love of God and man, which is the ſum of goodneſs, and without which nothing elſe is ſo, is but a ſneaking virtue in the eyes of the humanly virtuous and worldly prudent, if not totally diſregarded in their account of virtue.

Religious perſons cannot help giving offence, and are bound to it; but if they are truly ſuch, they will never do it but for the ſake of religion.

O! how I long to be received into the univerſal ſyſtem of love, and to embrace every occaſion of doing good, as food to an appetite, and the refreſhment of nature!

If an injury is done me, why ſhould I do myſelf a much greater by reſenting it? We do not quarrel with our ſtomachs for being ſick, or with our bodies for giving us pain; ſtill we have no deſire but to gratify and put them in order again.

Thus we ſhould be affected towards all mankind; and ſtudy only their good, let them do what they will to us.

I bleſs and praiſe the author of my being for giving me a nature capable of love, for ſhewing me the excellence of it, inflaming my deſires after it, and promiſing to give it in Chriſt Jeſus, my Lord.

Love all mankind ſo well as to love God only better. Anger, ſpite, ill-nature, &c. are ſure to vex one, viz. the ſubject. The ſureſt way to keep others in temper, is to keep ourſelves ſo. Love all, help all, bear with all, condeſcend to all; but depend on none.

No one can deſire to make others chriſtians, who is not ſo himſelf; and a true chriſtian cannot but deſire it. Diſintereſted,

Diſinterreſted, impartial, univerſal love of mankind is the temper of happineſs in us, and eſſential to it; but love of any thing as our happineſs beſides God in Chriſt, is our curſe and miſery. Acts of beneficence contribute nothing to our happineſs, but ſwell us with conceit; blind and corrupt us, if they are not acts of love.

Let me direct all my ſtudies chiefly to the great end of ſerving others in love; and not merely with a view to the pleaſure of knowing; much leſs to ſelf-applauſe, or the good opinion of the world.

When others are unreaſonably croſs to us, we little think, 1. that the devil works upon, and is ſetting himſelf againſt us by their tempers, and that now is the time for conflict and manful oppoſition; nor, 2. what pity is due to thoſe who are thus influenced by him. Let others be what they will, I muſt love them at my peril. Why then ſhould I lay the greateſt obſtacle in the way of it, by aggravating their faults, or being forward to ſuſpect any ill of them?

How glorious and happy to ſay truly in caſe of injury, "the author of it only hurts me by hurting himſelf!" Before you reſent a thing, take time, a twelvemonth at leaſt, to conſider whether there be any real cauſe for it; and if you find there is, do not deliberate a moment, whether you ſhould forgive.

Serve

Serve all with hearty good-will; but know mankind better than to expect much love or gratitude from them. Say all the good you can of all; but if you would have ill ſpoken of any, turn that office over to the devil.

The beſt way of being thankful to God for what he gives me, is a liberal diſtribution of it. Love every man for Chriſt's ſake, and fear none in his cauſe.

When I am forward to ſpeak the evil I know, or perhaps only ſurmiſe of others, what can it proceed from but a deſire that they ſhould be univerſally deſpiſed, or fear leſt they ſhould not? how diabolical! Leave an ill report to ſhift for itſelf; you need not ſay a word to ſet it forward.

I love thoſe as my beſt friends who want my aſſiſtance. If I hoard any money, it is no more to me than if it was another man's, which I had in keeping; it is only mine by being well beſtowed.

Selfiſhneſs, with a meaſure of prudence, will make a good father, huſband, friend, and neighbour; will perform many acts of virtue, and anſwer all the ends of ſociety; and what can religion do more? Nothing, but turn ſelfiſhneſs into love, and make that a reality, which before was counterfeit.

Dr. Young ſays, "there are ſome whom we cannot love but for God's ſake." It is a happy experience,

experience, and full proof of a ſupernatural change, when we find that there are none whom we do not ſo love.

I ſpare to ſpend; enjoy more what I ſpend than what I ſpare; and what I give more than what I ſpend. What I give cheerfully and for Chriſt's ſake, is charity to myſelf. The farthing I give is gold, the guinea I keep in my pocket is lead. When Chriſt comes with any one to aſk me to lend, he muſt not be denied, though I know he does not always intend to repay in kind. Oh, how happy ſhould we be, if we could impart ourſelves to all, in all kinds of help, with the ſame freedom and propenſity (στοργη) that a mother gives the breaſt to her child!

1 *John* iv. 10. Our love is not the cauſe or foundation of peace of conſcience; but peace of conſcience, grounded on the knowledge of God's love, is the ſpring and origin of our love to God and man; and this love in us is the ſureſt proof of vital faith.

Let others' contempt of me, and the evil which I obſerve in ſuch a diſpoſition, be a ſtrong call to me not to deſpiſe them.

If I was to read St. Paul's deſcription of charity for a thouſand years together, I could not get one property of it into my heart, before charity can flow out of it, as from a ſpring; God muſt firſt caſt the ſalt of the Spirit into it.

Memorandum.

Memorandum. To have no controverſy (if poſſible) with any one but myſelf.

Let who will die of thoſe who are near and dear to me, I ſhall ſtill have enough left to love and be tenderly concerned for, whilſt there are men upon earth.

Why ſhould I cauſe uneaſineſs to others by reaſoning or reproaches, however juſt, unleſs it be for their ſpiritual good; and when it can have no other effect but to inflame their paſſions, provoke their ill-will, and diſturb the frame of my own mind.

Thank God for intruſting me with money to give, and much more for a will to give it. Woe be to me, if I keep back any part of it. Can I, in this time of dearth, keep back a ſingle ſixpence from him who ſhed every drop of his blood for me! Surely I have ſin enough already, and more than I well know how to think will be forgiven.

Fear ſeldom does the whole of what is to be done; and beſides, is unſteady. Nothing but love carries a man through with reſolution; and you may as well build a houſe on a wave of the ſea, as love on any thing but faith in the peace of God. Fear forbears more than acts, and both under the laſh; love has wants of its own, to fly to all good and from all evil.

When we have ſaid all we can, it is better to do ſomething in fear, than nothing without it.

The

The difference betwixt carnal and ſpiritual love is, that one is convergent, the other divergent; one is drawn to a point, like the rays in a burning glaſs, the other is diffuſive, like the rays of the ſun; one is particular and excluſive, the other is general, equal, and impartial.

If there was but one perſon in the world whom I knew to be the creature and workmanſhip of God, and all the reſt made by chance, how greatly ſhould I think of that perſon's nature and original, and how ready ſhould I be to help him in all his neceſſities, for the ſake of the divine impreſſion he bears, and great dignity of relation? Behold, O man, thou art placed in a world of ſuch beings; all the offspring of God, dear to him as his children, thy brethren by the ſame high birth, and every one of them demanding thy love, eſteem, and utmoſt compaſſion.

The man who wants me, is the man I want. Memorandum; to do my duty to every one I come in company with, and pay Chriſt ſome part of the debt I owe him. "Take care of him," for Chriſt's ſake, and with a feeling of his bowels.

God intends we ſhould be happy, and cannot approve of any thing in us but what has a tendency to make us ſo. Hence the neceſſity of a free obedience from a root of love; for all force is miſery.

If I conſider how God loved me, who can be too wicked for me to love? To a believer, every

diſtreſſed object is Chriſt's peremptory demand, or bill on ſight, written with his blood, for ſo much help, or ſuch a ſum, as the caſe requires.

Let others ſay and do what they will; I muſt love. The obloquy, or ill uſage of others, is my opportunity for ſelf-inſpection; and I am convinced by a late occurrence, how much more happy I might have been all my life in a ſpirit of love. Not one of its properties, ſet down in 1 *Cor.* xiii. muſt be wanting.

To love mankind, knowing what they are, can be nothing but the work of omnipotence, and of God in man. I ſhall never love all mankind as I ought, till I hate myſelf.

CHAP. XI.

RESIGNATION.

SUbmiſſion to the will of God, with experience of his ſupport in pain, ſickneſs, affliction, is a more joyous and happy ſtate than any degree of health or worldly proſperity.

He who had no ſin ſuffered for all ſin; well may I, who have ſo much, and laid ſo heavy a load upon him, be content to ſuffer a little for my own. Lying awake all night—there is no ſleep in hell. *Rev.* xiv. 11.

I ſee God in every thing; in pain I feel him; and know he is come near to me upon ſome gracious deſign. I never have ſo lively a ſenſe of the being, preſence, and goodneſs of God, as in pain, ſickneſs, and ſuffering; it puts me upon thinking, and I cannot avoid coming to this concluſion, that it is ordained by his immediate will, and that he does it in mercy.

Inſtead of repining at bodily diſorders, think how many have much greater, and how to be thankful both for thoſe you have and have not. Pain, affliction, &c. is only God's ſpeaking louder.

The ſtrangury is a meſſenger ſent from heaven to warn me home, to reconcile me to the thought of death, and prepare me for a happy reception into another world.

In pain, ſickneſs, trouble, methinks I hear God ſaying, Take this medicine, exactly ſuited to the caſe, prepared and weighed by my own hands, and conſiſting of the choiceſt drugs which heaven affords.

If I was left to myſelf, I ſhould never think of crucifying ſin with the ſtone and ſtrangury as God does. The ſtrangury has not done its work yet by far.

Say, my heart, with reſpect to the ſtone, "I am unworthy of this mercy: Lord, let it be more or leſs painful, and the means of death ſooner or

later, as thou pleaſeſt, only make it a means of thy grace to me."

If the croſs ſhould be laid upon me, it will come aſſuredly to my relief; and I muſt be deſtitute of grace, and dead to all conſideration, if I do not regard it as help, and an eſpecial mercy vouchſafed in a time of great danger.

A cold north wind.—Have patience with God.

If my heart and will were given up to God, ſtone, gravel, ſtrangury, &c. would be well endured, and death come with a ſmile on its face. *

If I am afflicted, or ſick, or weak, or in pain, let me not comfort myſelf chiefly with thinking that it will quickly be over, or that I ſhall ſoon be well, but rather with thinking and knowing that it is the appointment of divine wiſdom; for reaſons of infinite concernment to myſelf, and for the end which God has chiefly in view for his people in all his inflictions, viz. the glory of his name in their ſpiritual health and recovery; and a bleſſed ſupport it will be, to know and feel that I do not ſo much deſire eaſe and deliverance from the preſent trouble, as grace and ſtrength to undergo more and greater, and even death itſelf, quietly, obediently, in the ſpirit of faith, and with full acceptance of the will of God.

This

* Mr. Darracot, a valuable Miniſter of Wellington, in Somerſetſhire. He died of the ſtone, full of joy in Chriſt Jeſus. The torment of the ſtone was ſo greatly alleviated, that in his laſt moments he ſaid to the friends, who ſtood around him, "Is this dying?——'Tis ſo eaſy, 'tis ſo eaſy."

This whole life is a ſtate of labour and ſuffering in order to our purification, and not of enjoyment, either temporal or ſpiritual.

I believe no man is obliged to ſell all he has, &c. becauſe Chriſt gave ſuch a command to one perſon, any more than he is obliged to ſacrifice his ſon becauſe God commanded Abraham to do ſo; and yet, doubtleſs, theſe were written for our inſtruction, that we might be ready always to obey the ſevereſt calls of Providence. A matter of no ſmall difficulty, and which we infinitely deceive ourſelves and others in. It is a common thing for people to ſay, God's will be done, without one grain of ſincerity or true reſignation.

It is one point of happineſs, and perhaps the higheſt we can attain to, to know and be fully convinced that at the beſt we are but poorly qualified for it; and therefore muſt not expect it in this life. The generality of mankind create to themſelves a thouſand needleſs anxieties, by a vain ſearch after a thing that never was, nor ever will be found upon earth: Let us then ſit down contented with our lot; and in the mean time be as happy as we can in a diligent preparation for what is to come.

The world is ſo conſtituted that obedience to the commands of God is impoſſible, without taking up the croſs daily: But then, they who are unwilling to take up the croſs, explain away all the trying commands of the goſpel, and that of the croſs in the firſt place.

If

If any thing, tho' ever ſo dear, is taken from me by the order of Providence, I have no longer any intereſt in it, or buſineſs with it. The cloud is taken up, (Numb. ix. 17.) and my ſtation is fixed for ſome other place. God is now in the abſence and privation of it, and if ever I find him it muſt be there.

It is our duty to bleſs God for the meaſure of grace we have, and to reſt ſatisfied with his appointment in ſpirituals as well as temporals. Every degree of real grace is his gift, and the work of the Spirit, who divideth to every man ſeverally as he will; and to be thankful for lower degrees of grace, notwithſtanding the moſt ardent deſires and longings after the higheſt, is perhaps the trueſt as well as moſt difficult kind of humility and reſignation. *Rom.* xiv.

Chriſt is a refiner's fire, *Mal.* iii. We could like well enough to come and warm ourſelves at this fire; but the buſineſs depends upon being thrown into it.

Be not diſturbed for trifles. By the practice of this rule we ſhould come in time to think moſt things too trifling to diſturb us.

Till I make, thro' grace, a full and free ſurrender of myſelf, my heart and conſcience, whole ſtate and being to God, in ſimplicity and ſincerity, his will for my ſalvation and recovery cannot take place in me; I ſhall not be ſteady a moment in the practice of holineſs.

The

The higheſt angels are at an infinite diſtance from the knowledge of God; and, therefore, there muſt of neceſſity be always ſomething, in his nature and acts, myſterious even to them: Why then ſhould not we be content with our darkneſs, and ſubmit to live by faith here, when we muſt do it to all eternity?

How can I be happy but in God? And how can I be in God with a will contrary to, or but indifferent to his? No quiet in the ſpirit till we ſettle upon this baſis of reſt and ſatisfaction, acquieſcence in the will of God; contentedneſs under the accidents of life; patience with the humours of all about us, and cheerful ſubmiſſion to the demands of the preſent hour.

God, who knows my ſtate, and the danger I am in, ſends pain to warn me of it, to make me dread ſin more than pain, and to think how I ſhall ever be able to endure remedileſs, everlaſting pain.

Suffering is an excellent preacher, ſent immediately from heaven, to ſpeak aloud in the name of God to the heart, mind, and conſcience, and has ſaved many a ſoul, when, humanly ſpeaking, nothing elſe could. If it was not for pain, I ſhould ſpend leſs time with God.

We may have ſome faint wiſh, and perhaps real deſire, to be freed from ſin; but not in God's way of a broken, contrite heart, or ſome grievous ſuffering.

In a fit of the colic—Death frees from all ſin; eaſes of all troubles; clears up all miſtakes; and is a full anſwer to all my prayers.

If I had not been kept awake with the tooth-ach, I ſhould have loſt a lively acting of faith, and one of the ſweeteſt experiences I ever had in my life.

The will of God may put me to pain; but it is the will of God.

Joſeph ſeems to have been at the height of perfection when he reſiſted the ſolicitations of Potiphar's wife; but if he had not wanted ſome farther refinement, God would never have ſent him to priſon.

If Mr. ——'s writings ſhould be loſt, and the 500l. I have depending upon them, it will be my own fault if I do not make it a ſtep towards heaven, and receive more advantage and comfort from the loſs than I could from the money.

The writings may not be loſt; and if they are, the money may be ſafe: But if it is not, am I ſafe, as to my inward diſpoſition, in a pure reſignation to the will of God, to give and take as he pleaſes; and am I ſenſible that a much greater croſs is wanted.

The diſorder of my body is the very help I want from God; and if it does its work before it

it lays me in the duſt, it will raiſe me up to heaven.

In affliction ſee the neceſſity of it, and be humble; ſee the uſe of it, and improve it; ſee the love there is in it, and be thankful. I know of no greater bleſſing than health, except pain and ſickneſs.

If we reflect on the exceeding ſinfulneſs, deſert, and horrible curſe of ſin, as repreſented in the dreadful conſequences of the firſt man's ſin, and the neceſſity of Chriſt's death, how comparatively light is all we ſuffer for our own multiplied tranſgreſſions, eſpecially conſidering that ſuffering is a corrective, as well as puniſhment; and that, in the worſt of troubles, we have this hope to ſupport us, that there is redemption from all ſin by the blood of Chriſt. I know this is but a thought, and, without God, will work no effect.

In the paroxyſm of pain or proſpect of death, I can no more reaſon myſelf into a ſtate of perfect ſubmiſſion and tranquillity, than I can think the ſtone out of my body. God's patience is that which he requires and gives, extends to every thing, and holds out till death.

Why ſhould any man complain, or think his lot hard, when he has a God to live with, and order all his affairs in this world, and to do ſo when he dies?

I find it hard to bear and be contented with the diſpoſal of Providence in temporal things; but much harder to bear my want of contentment, with perfect reſignation to the will of God, and be as poor in ſpirit as I am in reality.

Query. Whether it is not a high degree of holineſs in a man who ſees and laments his ſin, and feels it as the heavieſt of all burdens, to bear it patiently, and with ſubmiſſion to the divine will, as he would any other affliction, till God is pleaſed to remove it?

There is no coming to God but through pain: No matter how, if we do but come to him.

I am a cow poorer, a thought richer: If I do not give more, God will take more away.

God be thanked that I do pray, though but poorly. I will complain to none but God, and never of God. However I am croſſed, or whatever I ſuffer, God does me no wrong; intends me no hurt, deſigns my good; I may well be patient, I muſt do more; there is obligation in the caſe, I muſt be thankful.

Bleſſed be God for all his favours, and particularly for the ſpecial mercy of the ſtone.

We are always thinking we ſhould be better with or without ſuch a thing; but if we do not ſteal a little content in preſent circumſtances, there is no hope of any other. It

It is our duty to bear the diſorders of the mind, as well as thoſe of the body; feeling both, applying proper remedies, and ſubmitting quietly to the will of God.

Whatever God is pleaſed to do with me, in me, for me, bleſſed be his will. If God gives me patience, and quiet ſubmiſſion to his will, in the want of what I pray for, he gives me enough, and more than I aſk. At all events let the will of God be mine, in ſpite of nature, reputation, eaſe, or worldly intereſt.

Real heart-felt ſubmiſſion to the will of God in pain, ſickneſs, croſſes, every thing, never was the work of a man's own ſpirit; and when it comes from above, in anſwer to prayer, is full amends for all we can ſuffer.

I have juſt ſo much godlineſs as God gives me, and no more; and it is a neceſſary, but hard part of religion, to be contented and thankful, whether it be much or little. If this thought does not keep me humble and dependent, drive me to prayer, and make Chriſt all in all to me, I know not what will.

God does not regard what he makes us ſuffer, if he can but keep us out of hell. When I am in pain, I have a ſtrong conviction of my obligation to Chriſt for delivering me from eternal pain.

When pain comes, God comes. Welcome pain. We ſhould bear pain better, if we did not increaſe it by impatience, or apprehenſion of the iſſue, and ſuffered nothing but the pain.

God's will is bleſſed, and, whether it be for or againſt me, I muſt wait patiently, and receive all as a gift; for I find I can do nothing.

Bear a late croſs, as from God, and you will be prepared for a heavier, and have him bearing all with you.

Come what will, God does me no harm. If God has given me Chriſt, what have I to complain of; and how ſhould I welcome the diſeaſe, or decay which is ſent to ſecure him to me, and bring me to him!

Whether ſoap and lime-water will cure the ſtone, I know not; I am ſure the ſtone will cure me. The ſtone is an anſwer to my prayers.

It is hard to bear croſſes, but harder to bear with my own impatience. And yet if God is not pleaſed to deliver me from it, upon my endeavour and prayer, what can be more a duty than ſubmiſſion in the caſe, eſpecially as I have Jeſus Chriſt to thank him for?

When pain comes, I can hardly think of any thing but God; when I am at eaſe, the heart returns to its bent, the world reſumes its place in it, and God leaves me. God

God conſults my intereſt in every thing, not me; and though I know he cannot be miſtaken in what he does, I find it hard to give my conſent to it.

When pain comes, it ſeems as if it was reached out to me by the hands of an angel who is come poſt with it from heaven; glad of the office of adminiſtering to my ſafety and improvement; rejoicing in the love of God towards me, and calling upon me to join with him in bleſſing God for it.

God is always with me, though I am not with him; and becauſe I do not advert to his preſence, he ſends pain to introduce, and even force me into his company.

—In the ſtrangury.—If ever I am to come to ſelf-knowledge, to repentance, to Chriſt, to God, this is the way pointed out to me by a clear light ſhining upon it from heaven.

What would thouſands and ten thouſands give to be no more in pain than I am? What I ſuffer would be perfect eaſe to them.

I never have ſuch a lively and full conviction of my weakneſs and abſolute dependence upon God, as in pain or ſickneſs. Aquieſcence in his bleſſed will, choice of what he chooſes for me, and thankfulneſs for the mercy, I know to be my duty, and would gladly work this diſpoſition

in

in myſelf, but find by repeated experience, that I have no more power over my mind than I have over my body.

By pain God drives me to prayer, teaches me what prayer is, and inclines me to pray.

It is a ſore trial to the ſoul to be deprived of all earthly comforts, and reduced to the neceſſity of living upon God.

No man, let him be ever ſo great a ſaint, reſigns himſelf to God's method of cure in ſuffering, with the ſame choice, confidence, and fulneſs of conſent, that he would put himſelf into the hands of a ſurgeon to be cut for the ſtone.

If we do not propoſe to ourſelves the ſame end in ſuffering which God does, ſelf-knowledge and the purification of the heart, it muſt neceſſarily be without effect.

Becauſe I trifle with my ſoul, and do not enter reſolutely into a proceſs of mortification, God in mercy takes the matter into his own hands, and ſends pain to do that for me, which I am not willing to do for myſelf.

God ſometimes will not let me ſleep, but keeps me awake to catechiſe me; and is always ready with ſome new inſtruction or conviction.

Not

Not a bit too much pain; with God's help I can think ſo from my heart, take it patiently, and bleſs him for the mercy of it.

When I ſuffer moſt, I will comfort myſelf with thinking that I might, and that many do ſuffer more; and that all I can ſuffer is not only much leſs than I deſerve, but ordained in mercy as the means of my eternal happineſs.

Trouble is the engine in God's hands to lift us up to heaven.

What can I not bear with the help of God; what can I do or ſuffer without it?

The very point and top of reſignation, is to ſubmit quietly to the leading of God in the want of ſenſible ſupport and comfort.

The pain of pain is impatience under it, and apprehenſion of its continuance or conſequences; it might be greatly alleviated, if we adverted only to the preſent time, and did not add to it the burden of to-morrow.

Pain comes for puniſhment and purification; the one I am ſure I deſerve, and have great cauſe to lament the ſlowneſs and imperfection of the other.

If chaſtiſement is a token of God's love, why ſhould I faint under it, or ſo much as deſire re-

leaſe

leaſe from it till it has done it's work? I muſt ſuffer and die; with the help of God I will ſuffer and die.

CHAP. XII.

PRAYER.

I Have great hope from the promiſes made to prayer that I ſhall begin to live before I die.

What is the meaning of prayer, but that God would do what we cannot; and how vainly do we aſk the help which we do not think we want?

The loſs of prayer is the greateſt of all loſſes; and yet how many prayers are rendered fruitleſs, if not turned into ſin, through inattention, levity of ſpirit, unbelief, inſenſibility of want, or greater deſire of ſomething elſe in the heart.

No man need be miſerable or unhelped, ſo long as there is a way open to the throne of grace.

If we pray at all, we muſt be poor, helpleſs, and reſigned; neither thinking we have already what we aſk, or that we can give it to ourſelves, or ſetting a time, or preſcribing a meaſure to God.

Nothing is more eaſy than to ſay the words of a prayer; but to pray hungering and thirſting is the hardeſt of all works. What

What more need to be ſaid of prayer, than that it brings God into the heart, and keeps ſin out?

"Aſk, and it ſhall be given you:" I aſk, therefore it is given me. The conſequence is infallible; only let God chooſe the time and manner of giving.

Praying with the heart, for the heart, is praying by the Spirit, whether with or without a form.

No true prayer is loſt, though we may have forgot it.

Bleſſed be God, I do not only begin to pray when I kneel down, but leave not off praying when I riſe up.

All prayer is hypocriſy and ſad deceit, if we do not aſk what God would have us to aſk, and really deſire what we aſk.

We can have no grace or ſpiritual ſupply without aſking; and whatever we think of ourſelves, or ſay to God, we cannot act without felt want, and real deſire. Of thoſe that do pray, how few pray from their own ſenſe, or any particular knowledge of their own circumſtances.

Acquieſcence in the bare act of prayer, is a moſt dangerous deluſion, and keeps the ſoul from its proper relief.

O God, give me what thou knoweſt to be good, and thou alone knoweſt what is good; give me more than I can aſk or think; if the reverſe of what I aſk is what I ſhould aſk, give me that; let me not be undone by my prayers.

Many pray not to be kept from ſin, but to keep it; and with a ſecret hope that prayer will excuſe it, and be accepted inſtead of reformation.

God does not want our praiſes; but the diſpoſition to praiſe him is eſſential to our own happineſs, and therefore required.

I put my prayers into Chriſt's hands; and what may I not expect from them, when I have ſuch an advocate?

Prayer is living with God; and if founded upon right principles of religion, puts us upon ſearching the heart, leads us to the knowledge of our wants and weakneſs, and fixes us in dependence upon God: Nothing is more eaſy as a bare duty or lip-ſervice, and nothing more difficult than the performance of it in truth and ſincerity.

Prayer is knowing work, believing work, thanking work, ſearching work, humbling work, and nothing worth if heart and hand do not join in it.

There is abundant comfort in the thought that God has given me a deſire and will to pray for the bleſſings

bleſſings of Jeſus; whether with greater or leſs fervour at the time of praying, it matters little as to the event; I may repoſe myſelf quietly on his word, in full aſſurance that there will be a performance of all his promiſes, in life, death, and eternity.

The great miſtake of prayer is, not praying as poor and deſtitute creatures, but thinking that we are and have already in ſome good degree what we pray for. See a notable inſtance of this in *Lord Bacon's* prayer. *Tatler*, *No.* 267. The Liturgy is formed upon a different plan, and puts us on a better method.

Be ſure not to aſk a little of God.

It is a great miſtake that prayer is loſt, or nothing but formality, becauſe we do not find comfort in it, or any immediate effect from it, or pray with ſo much fervour as we could wiſh.

We are on the wrong ſide of prayer till we have a lively ſenſe of our condition in ſin, and are convinced by ſelf-knowledge of the neceſſity of redemption from the guilt and power of it.

It is a ſad miſtake in religion to acquieſce in the form of prayer, without obtaining or deſiring to obtain what is aſked.

It is an eaſy work to offer up many prayers to God; but who almoſt offers up himſelf to him?

We are apt to ſuppoſe that nothing is a return to prayer, but the very thing we aſk: But if there is a better way of granting our requeſts than we think of, it is well for us that God will not chooſe the worſt.

We eat for bodily ſtrength, and for ſtrength to labour. So the ſpiritual life muſt be renewed and maintained by continual ſupplies of grace, to the end we may perform the ſervice we owe to God. The conſequence is, we muſt pray at leaſt as often as we eat.

All power of ſpiritual renovation is from God; and it is a fatal miſtake to look for it in ourſelves, or in books, the ſcriptures not excepted. One prayer is worth a thouſand fine thoughts.

Let your prayer be ſhort, and think a long time before you begin, what you are going to ſay, and what you mean by it; that is, to ſpeak plainly, whether you would be taken at your word, and put to the pain of having your prayers anſwered. It would be death to the generality even of thoſe who appear on the ſide of religion, to receive or be what they pray for.

When I pray, it is for a moral impoſſibility, and for as great a miracle, as if I was to ſay, "ſun, ſtand ſtill." I ſhall never love God and hate ſin as I ought, till I pray better.

Want

Want felt, and help desired, with faith to obtain it, is prayer; and without these qualifications whatever is called so, is nothing but self-deceit and lying to God.

We shall never be christians till we think as we pray, and always carry the same humbling sentiments about us, as if we were on our knees before God.

I can expect no good effect from my prayers, till I know what I am, and do not pray above my state, or think more highly of it and of myself than I ought to think; but sit down in the lowest room, as I well may without any fear of mistaking my place.

It seems to me that the first thing we should pray for, is a sense of our wants, with a will and desire to pray according to them.

CHAP. XIII.

SACRAMENT of the LORD's SUPPER.

AT the time of receiving.—Lord, I here appeal to thy sacrifice against my sin, to thy grace against my corruption, to thy love against my fears, to thee against myself. I believe thy word; I remember thy command; I adore thy goodness; I wait for thy salvation. Give effect to thine

thine own ordinance, and make it the ſeal of mercy, and the conveyance of life to me. O Jeſus, come to my heart.

I go to the ſacrament for mercy, and ſtrength to keep mercy; to profeſs my faith in Chriſt, that I have pardon and peace with God, life and righteouſneſs only by his death and merits; and to own my obligation to live unto him that died for me, in faith, love, and ſelf-dedication. I go to the ſacrament for Chriſt's love and likeneſs; for the benefit, and for the munition of the croſs; to have the load of ſin taken from my heart; and any other which Chriſt thinks fit, laid upon my back.

Was pardon, ſalvation, and life received in the ſacrament? Did I ſo or ſo bid an eternal farewell to ſin; and have I the poiſon of it expelled by the virtue of Chriſt's body and blood?

I go to the ſacrament to leave ſin behind me, and receive Chriſt inſtead of it; and if I do the one, laying my ſins on Chriſt, with a will to forſake them, I am ſure of the other. Lord, grant me thy peace, and all that comes with it, love, patience, reſignation, thankfulneſs, deliverance from the fear of death, and a hearty longing for eternity.

I go to the ſacrament for the pardon of ſin, for the kindling of love, for the turning of my heart, for the renewal of my will.

I do not go to the Lord's table to give, but to receive; not to tell Chriſt how good I am, but to think how good he is. I have a great many ſins and wants to tell him of, more than would take up the whole day; and when I have told him all that I know of myſelf, it is not the half, but a very little of what he knows of me. I bring myſelf, that is ſin, to him, believing that he will be all to me, and do all for me that is in his heart; and I know it is a very compaſſionate one. I go as a ſinner to the Saviour. To whom elſe ſhould I go, with my blind eyes, foul leproſy, hard heart, and rebellious will? You tell me I muſt have I know not how many graces and qualifications to go to the ſacrament with; but I cannot ſtay for them: My wants are urgent; I am a dying man. My Lord with his known kindneſs, ſays, "come; do this; remember me." His invitation is qualification enough; and I long to feed on him, to thank God for him, to take him into my heart. I will go to behold him crucified, and his blood poured out for me, in ſpite of all my ſins and fears, and though all the ſaints on earth ſtood up with one mouth to forbid me. I go to put myſelf under Chriſt's wings, and fly to him for refuge from the monſter ſin, ready to devour me.

I go to the ſacrament to know God and myſelf; to wonder at the reconciliation of ſtrict puniſhment with free pardon; to ſee the greatneſs of my ſin, and the greatneſs of my hope, in the greatneſs of the ſacrifice therein repreſented; to ſin no more, becauſe I believe there is no condemnation for

for my ſin; to be raiſed as high as heaven, and humbled in the duſt; to be aſtoniſhed at the myſtery of Chriſt crucified, and to profeſs that I know leſs of God than ever.

Let me be daily thinking of the ſacrament, daily in a ſtate of preparation for it, daily living upon it, reſolving to ſecure my portion in the love therein exhibited, by receiving it in faith and humility, as love and undeſerved mercy, making it my pattern, and dreading the ſin which could be expiated with no leſs a ſacrifice.

"Do this in remembrance of me;"—remember who I am, and what thou art; remember me as thy Saviour; remember me as thy maſter; remember my love; remember thy obligations; remember me as bearing thy ſin; remember me as hating thy ſin; remember me and fear not; remember me and ſin not; remember me, to live for me, by me, with me.

The day before the ſacrament. Knowing and aſſuredly believing the promiſes of God made over to me for the forgiveneſs of my ſins, thro' faith in the blood of Chriſt; I do, from a deteſtation of my ſinfulneſs, and a hearty ſenſe of my want of pardoning grace, accept his covenant of reſt and peace: Truſting in him for the accompliſhment of my whole ſalvation, in the way of goſpel-holineſs, by his Spirit; and reſolving without delay to put myſelf into his hands for that purpoſe. And may the God of mercies keep me

ſtedfaſt

ſtedfaſt in this faith and engagement, and carry me on from ſtrength to ſtrength, that I may be one with him, and with my Saviour, and live for him, and love him with all my heart, and with all my ſoul. Amen.

CHAP. XIV.

PASTORAL OFFICE.

I Muſt, I muſt incur the hatred of my pariſh and hearers, in love to them, and for Chriſt's ſake; but let me be infamous, ſo I may but do good.

Ruling ſlothfulneſs in a Miniſter of the goſpel is a certain mark of infidelity, or an unregenerate ſtate.

Let no man think he is qualified to ſeek and to ſave that which is loſt, as an agent under Chriſt, till he has firſt found himſelf.

A Clergyman, if in truth he is a follower of Chriſt, muſt not expect to have any friends in his pariſh but his converts; the reſt will deſpiſe, envy, and traduce him more than they do other men.

How much better would it be if, inſtead of cenſuring and bitterly inveighing againſt the ignorance, perverſeneſs, and corruption of my

neighbours, I exerted myſelf in good earneſt, according to the duty of my ſtation, and the talents which God has given me, to inſtruct and reform them. Perhaps, many a one has long been waiting at the pool of Bethesda for ſome friendly hand to help them in, and I paſs by them with a ſtupid unconcern, and leave them groaning under their miſery.

There is but one right way of preaching, which is to ſpeak the plain truths of the goſpel plainly: But then, this way is the hardeſt of all others, for it ſuppoſes converſion in the preacher.

It is the buſineſs of a Miniſter of the goſpel to preach faith and live morality.

I find it very difficult, if not impoſſible, thro' my ſelfiſhneſs to ſink myſelf into the common maſs of mankind, ſo as to take my full ſhare of their guilt, to ſympathize, to pity, to have a fellow-feeling of their wants, joys, and ſorrows, and be truly concerned for the temporal and ſpiritual welfare of all.

How glorious a diſtinction for any man to be employed, as an agent under Chriſt, in the recovery of ſouls; and what guilt not to attend upon it out of love to him, with the ſame ardour and aſſiduity that other Phyſicians do for their fees!

How can thoſe Preachers be ſuppoſed to bring others to Chriſt who never came to him themſelves?

We

We are greatly deceived in fancying that diſcernment, or approbation of moral excellence, is poſſeſſion, or ability to poſſeſs ourſelves of it. The Chriſtian Religion goes another way to work with us; and thoſe Preachers wretchedly miſtake their office, and abuſe their hearers, who ſpend all their diſcourſes in recommending virtue to their notice and eſteem, without leading them to the root of their diſorder, and pointing out the cure.

What would a Phyſician, who had a ſovereign cure for all diſeaſes, be accounted, if he kept it a ſecret, or was ſlothful in diſpenſing it, or mixed poiſon with it? How much more criminal is a Miniſter of the goſpel who thinks himſelf entruſted with an infallible medicine for all the diſorders of the ſoul, if he adulterates it, or is unfaithful and inactive in applying it?

I may conſcientiouſly take the wages for the work, when I have a diſtinct conſciouſneſs that I would do the work without the wages.

To relinquiſh, or intermit parochial labour, becauſe it is not attended with ſucceſs, would be terribly inexcuſable. Labour on; commit the matter to God; wait patiently; get a feeling of the bowels of Chriſt; and die praying, "Lord, pity the people!"

The declarations of ſcripture concerning the guilt of ſin, and the damnation of ſinners, may

be aſſented to; but are fully and efficaciouſly believed by few. Hence faintneſs of endeavour to ſnatch others out of the fire; cold prayer, ſpeaking, preaching, and writing, without real pity and heart-felt concern.

"But we will give ourſelves unto prayer and the miniſtry of the word." Remember this, O my ſoul, it is for eternity.

A poor country parſon fighting againſt the devil in his pariſh, has nobler ideas than Alexander had.

As a miniſter of the goſpel, I muſt either be deſpiſed or hated. I chooſe the latter.

Am I a Miniſter of Jeſus! with his bowels for ſouls! called! willing to be ſpent! regardleſs of worldly preferment! owned of God! hated of men! happy in myſelf!

Intruſion into the miniſtry for worldly ends, and with abſolute unfitneſs for it; in great ignorance of Chriſt; great unconcern for the ſalvation of ſouls; conſequent ſloth and remiſſneſs; ſquandering a large income in ſenſual pleaſures; and when I was ſomething awakened, doing what I did in ſelf-dependence and ſelf-ſeeking—How awful!

Dreamed that J. M. and S. E. were under ſoul-concern. I interpreted it as a call to go and ſpeak with them: But what ſhall I ſay to J. for not ſpeaking more to him, and to all others, without a dream?

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

HEAVEN.

MY heaven upon earth is communion with God; and therefore nothing elſe would be my heaven in heaven.

We ſhall never know any degree of happineſs in this life, till we are ſettled in a clear conviction of judgment, that it is chiefly hereafter, and that we are in the way to it. God forbid I ſhould ever think myſelf at home till I am in heaven.

Heaven is not a place or ſtate of idleneſs. Perhaps the higheſt angels have a taſk and work aſſigned them, which keeps them continually employed. What is conſidered as greatneſs and happineſs on earth is, having nothing to do.

Happineſs will be the neceſſary reſult of goſpel-holineſs, when external impediments are removed; but heaven itſelf would loſe its nature if the inward diſpoſition were wanting.

Our future exiſtence will be the ſame kind of life, or ſtate of being continued, which we are fixed in here. Death makes no alteration in our condition, it only clears up our miſtakes about it.

Thankfulneſs and happineſs imply each other. We muſt be thankful to be happy, and happy to be

be thankful. God's houſe is an hoſpital at one end, and a palace at the other. In the hoſpital-end are Chriſt's members upon earth, conflicting with various diſeaſes, and confined to a ſtrict regimen of his appointing. What ſort of a patient muſt he be, who would be ſorry to be told that the hour is come for his diſmiſſion from the hoſpital, and to ſee the doors thrown wide open for his admiſſion into the preſence?

Nothing can be our happineſs in this life, but what is to be the foundation of it in the next. If I cannot ſerve God and my Saviour with delight, and make a kind of heaven of it here, they have no other heaven for me hereafter.

We ſhall never know the thouſandth part of our mercies, deliverances, and protections, temporal and ſpiritual, till we come to another world.

In heaven, ſin known and pardoned is the ſong of praiſe; ſin known and unpardoned is hell.

If ever I thank Chriſt as I ought, it muſt be in heaven; it is in vain to think of doing it here.

Heaven is heaven rather as a ſtate of exemption from ſin than ſuffering. We muſt die for perfect conformity to the will of God; and it is worth dying for.

Delight in the will of God is the perfection of all intelligent beings, the eſſence of happineſs, the

the joy of angels, heaven upon earth, and the heaven of heaven.

Heaven is wherever God is; in my heart, if I deſire it, and delight in his preſence.

Ten thouſand years in this world would not complete my happineſs; I ſhould never be wiſe and good, have an abſolute command of my will, paſſions, and affections, without one irregular thought, vain wiſh, or ſpot of ſin. If we are really aiming at and longing for this perfection, how deſirable is death, which alone can put us in poſſeſſion of it? By death, we do not go out of life, but into life.

The chriſtian's hope of heaven is the ſweetneſs of proſperity, and the ſupport of adverſity, and cures us at once of all attachment to the world, or expectation of reſt in it.

If Chriſt had not brought down heaven to us, we could never have raiſed ourſelves up to it.

This world is the reign of darkneſs, pain, and ſorrow; and we muſt not expect fully to find God here as a preſent portion. The chriſtian believes that he ſhall know him better, and enjoy him fully hereafter. O my ſoul, hold faſt, and be very thankful for this ſweet hope.

"Let us labour to enter into that reſt." We like the reſt better than the labour of attaining it;

it; but cannot ſo much as have an idea of it, if we do not think it worth all the labour we can beſtow upon it.

It is a vain thing to think we can take any delight in being with Chriſt hereafter, if we care not how little we are in his company here.

The higheſt ſtate of the greateſt ſaint upon earth is only a ſmall taſte or glimpſe of heaven, in the firſt-fruits and earneſt of the Spirit. The full harveſt is beyond the grave, and is not to be expected in this world.

When I can truly ſay, "thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," I ſhall long to be in heaven, that I may do it perfectly.

What is the reaſon that we do not keep our eyes ſteadily fixed upon the light of ſcripture, and follow it as our guide to heaven, but becauſe we do not really think of heaven as the country we are bound to; have yet other deſigns in the world than to get thither, and, whatever we pretend, do not deſire to be there?

I long to know ſomething, and be ſomething; i. e. to die. I ſee the glory and beauty of perfect holineſs, as Moſes did the promiſed land from mount Piſgah; but, like him, muſt die without entering into the poſſeſſion of it.

"Thy

"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;" that is, with angelical love and liking, and the full bent of our desire to it. A virtuous, pure, holy state is a strong tendency to all good, and only to good; and if we could suppose the mind to be in a state of suspense or indifference, and equally poised between good and evil, it would be a bad state. What then is man with a natural and morally invincible propensity to evil?

Unless I see something beyond the grave worth dying for, there is nothing on this side worth living for.

How welcome will death be to those who truly mourn for sin, feel the burden, taste the bitterness of it, and long for complete deliverance from it!

CHAP. XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE commandment is holy, and just, and good; not only in its precept, but curse. The first is evident, and denied by none; the latter is never believed but by a work of the Spirit.

Let us talk no more of the constitution of this or that country, and the excellence of one above

another; it is in every man's power, thro' grace, to live under the beſt government in the world.

We may put on different cloaths and different looks; ſpeak different words, and do different actions on a Sunday, but nature will be the ſame that it is all the reſt of the week. Sunday, in our reſt from bodily labour and employment, in the thoughts it ſuggeſts, the proſpect it opens, the hope it confirms, is a day taken from time, and made a portion of eternity.

Dreams indicate the temper of the ſoul more certainly than they do the temperament of the body. Dreams have no diſſimulation; they unmaſk the heart, and tell me honeſtly what I am when waking.

A forced obedience will not make us happy in this world, but may not be loſt as to another.

Hell is truth ſeen too late.

What is it to me whether the Americans are in a ſtate of rebellion, or not? Why do I not advert more to the rebellion of my own heart and will againſt God?

A partial half-religion is a ſtate of terrible anxiety.

Why is man for ever ſearching after pretences to wander from home? Fixing the laws of motion;

tion; meaſuring the planets; prying with glaſſes into the minuteſt parts of nature; and either gazing with ſtupid wonder on what he can never underſtand, or, what is worſe, circumſcribing Omnipotence, and ſaying, "Thus it muſt be," when all the while the poor ſoul within him, buried in fleſh and blood, wants its proper relief, begs his attention, and, being known, would infinitely reward his curioſity?

If we do not live down error, I am ſure we ſhall never diſpute it down.

The eager reading even of religious books may be dangerous, and a hindrance to thoſe who are aiming at the true ſpirit of religion, if they have recourſe to them inſtead of God.

SERMON I.

PSALM XXXII. 5, 6.

I will acknowledge my ſin unto thee, and mine unrighteouſneſs have I not hid:
I ſaid, I will confeſs my ſins unto the Lord, and ſo thou forgaveſt the wickedneſs of my ſin.

THE two firſt verſes of this Pſalm, St. Paul alledges to prove that great point of Chriſtian doctrine, that as all are ſinners there is no poſſibility of ſalvation for any man but in the free grace of God in Chriſt. The Pſalmiſt ſays, "Bleſſed is he whoſe unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered; bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute ſin." Which words St. Paul takes up, and argues from them in this manner: If David thought himſelf bleſſed, not by having no ſin, but by confeſſing it, and caſting himſelf upon the mercy of God for the pardon of it, well may others think themſelves happy in the offer of that mercy, and fly to it as their hope and only refuge from condemnation. Saints or ſinners, Chriſt, he affirms, muſt be their ſafety, and the ground of their acceptance with God; for ſo Abraham, the friend of God, and David, the man after God's own heart, were juſtified, or accounted righteous. Whatever they were in themſelves, or in compariſon with other men, this was no plea for them to ſtand upon with God. If they would find favour at his hands,

they

they muſt give up all pretenſions to a juſtifying righteouſneſs of their own, and inſtead of making God their debtor, be ſaved by grace in common with the reſt of mankind. They *muſt*, and it is happy for us that all *may* be ſo ſaved; and that there is a ſufficiency of grace and merit in Chriſt for the worſt of men, if they will but lay hold on it: "For this is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners."

From all this it is evident, that, let the caſe of any be ever ſo bad, their being ſinners does not exclude them from the hope of ſalvation; but is the very reaſon why they ſhould come to Chriſt for it, as to ſave them was the very end of his coming into the world; and David here ſays, that we might ſay it after him, "Thou forgaveſt the wickedneſs of my ſin." You ſee he lays a heavy load upon himſelf, and adds one word to another to expreſs the ſenſe he had of the guilt of ſin, and the greatneſs of his own. One, who has leſs ſincerity than he, would have been content to ſay, "Thou forgaveſt my ſin;" but this was not enough for him; like all God's children, he had a piercing ſight of the abominable nature of ſin, and would not diminiſh one jot from the horrible guilt of his own; obſerve, he ſays, the *wickedneſs* of my ſin. Well then, your ſin too may be forgiven, whatever it is, with all its guilt and wickedneſs; and when your fears riſe up againſt you, the text ſtands up on your ſide, and unleſs God is a reſpecter of perſons, you may plead it as his own

own word for the mercy of your forgiveneſs. If you are a Chriſtian, you know how this forgiveneſs comes to every ſoul of man, and have great cauſe to be thankful that you live at a time when Jeſus, the Saviour of ſinners, has been manifeſted to the world in all the power of his name, and all the riches of his grace. Bleſſed be God, the Bible is our birth-right; and you would think it your eſtate of inheritance, and greateſt earthly treaſure, if you did but conſider what glad tidings it brings you, and that it tells you of what no other book, no man upon earth, ever could, remiſſion of ſins, full diſcharge from condemnation, and peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Oh! how happy might you be; what comfort would you find in your ſouls; what pleaſant lives would you lead, if you were rooted and grounded in the belief of God's love to loſt mankind. And think on the other hand, that if you are not ſeeking after the great bleſſing of forgiveneſs by Chriſt, nor rejoice to hear it preached, nor live to God in the faith of it, you periſh for ever.

But then it is not your Baptiſm, nor Chriſtian name and appearance, that can afford you any aſſurance in the point. The text I am going to open has weighty inſtruction for you, which muſt not be lightly regarded. Your ſin muſt be known; the guilt of it muſt be diſcovered to you; the burden of it muſt be felt in ſuch a meaſure as to bring you ſorrowing to Chriſt, and make deliverance from it the moſt welcome news you ever heard. You all know you want forgiveneſs, and

think

think you truſt in him for it, and have no other hope; but if you have no ground for this belief in yourſelves, no heart-felt ſenſe of the accurſed nature of ſin, and of your own ſinfulneſs, no experience of the miſery of your condition without Chriſt, you delude yourſelves with a vain fancy, and are utter ſtrangers to a work of the Spirit: For if ever he brings you to Chriſt, it muſt be in the way of repentance, ſelf-knowledge, and fulneſs of confeſſion. This then is the point which the text leads me to ſpeak to. It is a hard one, and ſo the Pſalmiſt found it to be; for he tells us he was brought very low, becauſe he dealt deceitfully with God, and did not ſearch himſelf to the bottom: But nevertheleſs there is no other help for it, the method he took to come at his relief muſt be ſubmitted to by all; and here it is ſet up as our guide to God's peace, and to Chriſt the purchaſer of it.—"I will acknowledge my ſin unto thee, and mine unrighteouſneſs have I not hid: I ſaid, I will confeſs my ſins unto the Lord;" that is, fully, without reſerve, and without guile, which for a time he did not. I ſhall therefore, with God's help,

I. Shew that the confeſſion of our ſins muſt be full and hearty, without diſguiſe, reſerve, or exception.

II. Conſider what helps and means we are to make uſe of for this purpoſe.

I. The

I. The confeſſion of our ſins muſt be full, ſincere, and hearty, of all and every one, as ſins againſt God. And to this purpoſe let us obſerve what David here ſays of himſelf in the verſes immediately before the text; "While I held my tongue, my bones conſumed away thro' my daily complaining; for thy hand is heavy upon me day and night, and my moiſture is like the drought in ſummer." Whether it was trouble of mind, or, what is moſt probable, pain and waſting in his body, occaſioned by the inward vexation and ſorrow of his mind on account of ſin, he found no relief from it; and he tells us why he did not, he ſays, "I held my tongue;" that is, tho' I was burdened with my ſin, pined, and mourned, and complained inceſſantly becauſe of it, yet I did not take the way to be eaſed of my complaints, by going to the root of my diſorder. He was neither ignorant nor inſenſible of his ſin, nor unconcerned about it; he was ſorely grieved and afflicted, and knew that the hand of God was heavy upon him for it, and therefore made ſome acknowledgment of it: But ſtill he was held under his trouble, becauſe he was deceitful in the matter, and did not lay open all his ſin before God, in a full and free confeſſion of it; which, to all the intents and purpoſes of a pardon, was the ſame thing as if he had held his tongue, or ſaid never a word of his ſin to God.

Now you are not to conclude from hence that God deals exactly in the ſame manner with all, or that there is no way of coming to a thorough ſenſe and

ackowledgment of ſin but by being firſt brought into great bodily trouble and affliction, or even to death's door, as the Pſalmiſt was. It may, or may not be ſo, as God pleaſes, who knows beſt what every man's particular caſe requires. And what is here ſaid ſhould be a caution to you, when you ſee any greatly afflicted, and pining away under a ſenſe of their ſins, not to beſtow your fooliſh unmeaning pity upon them, or to judge raſhly of what you are ignorant; for it is the way which God takes with ſome, to bring them home to himſelf, and none can ſo feelingly rejoice in God their Saviour, or are ſo well fitted for the ſervice which he has for them to do in the world, as thoſe who have been deeply troubled, and ſmarted ſeverely for ſin. But this all are to take notice of from the paſſage before us, and conclude certainly, that ſo long as they deal deceitfully with God and themſelves in this matter of ſin; if they will not go to the bottom of the ſore; if they hold their tongues, or are guilty of concealment; if they would plead for, or have a thought of retaining one ſin, they are not in the way of their relief; and if they can by ſome means or other make their conſcience eaſy the mean while, yet aſſuredly there is no hope of their pardon.

We have a lively picture in Adam and Eve, of what men are naturally apt to do in the caſe of ſin. When they knew that they were naked, naked in ſin, and could not help ſeeing, in ſome meaſure, what they had done, they ſewed fig leaves together to cover up their ſin and ſhame from themſelves

themſelves as well as they could. When they found the Lord God was coming near to them, their next attempt was to hide themſelves from his preſence amongſt the trees of the garden. And, when they were brought to their examination, they both endeavoured to ſhift off the guilt of what they had done from themſelves, ſhe to the ſerpent, and he to the woman. So we, truly their children in this reſpect, ſtand out againſt God as long as we can; we would hide our ſin from ourſelves, and from him too if we could, and turn ourſelves into all ſhapes to avoid coming to a full confeſſion of it. Some part of it we cannot deny, and may be willing to own, eſpecially when conſcience, enlightened by the word of God, begins to be troubleſome, and tells us of our danger; then we cannot be wholly ſilent before him, nor ſatisfy ourſelves without ſaying ſomething to him of our ſin. But verily we are here told that this is doing nothing at all, and juſt the ſame thing as if we altogether held our tongues. I do not ſuppoſe we are ſo fooliſh, or ignorant of the nature of ſin, and of what God requires of us, as to think we can be entitled to pardon without ſome kind of confeſſion: But if we confeſs ſome ſins, why not all? Or who gave us a licence to except any? Surely not God; for all ſin is alike to him; and the will to retain any, ſhews plainly that we diſlike and repent of none upon true grounds, becauſe it is ſin, and brings us under the guilt of ſtubbornneſs and rebellion againſt God.

It is true, our ſins are ſo many that it may not be in our power to make a diſtinct mention of them all; which is a very good reaſon why we ſhould be as careful as poſſible to avoid them in the whole courſe of our lives, becauſe they cannot be called back by a particular remembrance; but none at all for ſhuffling with God and our conſciences, or concealing and making a reſerve of any that we do know. If you do, it is at the peril of your ſouls; and the point before us is this, if you hide, or keep back, or excuſe any one known ſin, you cannot be in God's way of mercy. For what is it that you have to ſay to him in ſuch a caſe? It is even horrible to think of: "Lord, ſuch and ſuch ſins trouble me, and I freely confeſs them to be ſins; but there is one or more which I cannot part with, at leaſt not now, though perhaps I may ſome time or other." Do no deceive yourſelves; for whilſt you are in this mind, this is all your confeſſion amounts to; and though I have put it to you in ſuch a manner as may well make you aſtoniſhed, yet God knows it to be the very language of the heart. Forgiveneſs from the Lord is well worth obtaining at any rate, and it is a grievous thing to think of living and dying without it; but he is at a word with us, and has given us the text as our guide to the mercy he has to beſtow on us: "I will acknowledge my ſin unto thee, and mine unrighteouſneſs have I not hid; I ſaid I will confeſs my ſins unto the Lord, and ſo thou forgaveſt the wickedneſs of my ſin." You have often heard and repeated theſe words in the courſe of the Sunday's

day's ſervice, without thought or ſerious application of them to your own ſtate. I beſeech you, aſk yourſelves, and learn from me the meaning of them now. Doubtleſs you would have your ſins forgiven, and live all your days in that comfort. Then here is your rule; you muſt acknowledge them, you muſt hide none of them, you muſt confeſs them all to the Lord. It is a vain thing to think of being accepted of him while you ſpare one. One ſin is ſin, and the wages of all ſin is death. What better then would you be, ſuppoſing that all others were confeſſed, if there is one ſtill ſtanding out againſt you to condemn you? Though you are not an adulterer, a fornicator, or a profane ſwearer, yet if you are a drunkard, or an evil-ſpeaker, or a ſabbath-breaker, or ſo bent upon the gain of this world, as to keep your heart from God, you are an unrighteous perſon, and the ſentence upon all ſuch ſingly is, "they ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God." The enemy of your ſouls, the devil himſelf, will ſuffer you, or if it be poſſible even help you to confeſs all your ſins but one, if he could be ſure you would keep that one. And by confeſſion of ſin you will underſtand confeſſion with a purpoſe to forſake it; and that not only, or not chiefly, becauſe you would be hurt by it in your body, eſtate, worldly intereſt, or reputation; but with a lively ſenſe upon your minds that it is ſin againſt God, and that his will is to be your law in all things. So think, and ſo do, and then as your are without guile before God, naked and open to yourſelves as you are to him, you may aſſure yourſelves that you are the bleſſed of the

Lord,

Lord, and that your ſins are forgiven. If you value this bleſſedneſs, and deſire above all things to obtain it, you will be glad to hear,

II. What helps and means you are to make uſe of for this purpoſe, namely, that the confeſſion of your ſins may be full, ſincere, and hearty.

1. To this end, ſet before you the law of God in the ten commandments, not once or twice in your lives, but often. You might do it daily, if you were ſo diſpoſed, and the oftener the better. The point already inſiſted on was, that confeſſion muſt be made of all ſins as diſtinctly and particularly as poſſible, without keeping back, or ſparing any. None of them muſt be hidden from God. He knows them without our ſpeaking, and we cannot hide them from him, if we would; but he wants to have *us* know them, and by telling him, to tell ourſelves of them. And the way to do this is to make conſcience of ſtudying his commandments, in order to be well ſkilled in them, whatever elſe we are ignorant of. He ſays thou ſhalt do this, thou ſhalt not do that: Alas! what will become of us if we live at random, and care for none of theſe things? Or how ſhall we put ourſelves in the way of God's forgiveneſs, if we have no will to know what he requires of us, and wherein we have offended? I ſay then, if you would confeſs your ſins to God in truth and ſincerity, and have a ſure guide in this neceſſary work, make it your buſineſs to underſtand and be well grounded in the will and law of God, as

ſet

ſet before you in the commandments. Think them over one by one from time to time, and lay yourſelves conſtantly to that rule, with this knowledge always at hand, that it is at the hazard of your ſouls if you do diminiſh any thing from them.

The law conſiſts of two parts, one relating to God, the other to our neighbour, and both are equally ſacred. Now if you could juſtify yourſelves in reſpect of your behaviour to men, yet can you ſay that you are as clear in reſpect of your duty to God? That you love him and his worſhip, that you honour his holy name, and delight in his ſabbaths? Or do you ſhrink up all your religion into the decency of an outward appearance, and centre all your hopes in the regularity of your moral or prudential conduct, to the neglect of what both reaſon and revelation teach you to regard in the firſt place, and, perhaps, with an utter contempt of devotion to God? And on the other hand, ſuppoſing that you are a devout worſhipper of God, and ſtrict in the performance of all religious duties, (which you know you are not) are you equally exact with regard to men, ſo as to bear malice or ill-will to none on any account whatſoever, never to injure, defraud, or ſpeak evil of any man, or withhold any good from him that is in your power, and want makes his due.

This is the method you muſt take, if you would be in earneſt with God and your ſouls; and whenever you do you will find work enough for confeſſion, and cannot be far to ſeek for many ſins which

which now are never thought of. But this is not all; the law of God reacheth to the heart, and if you do not go with it into that depth, and keep a watchful eye upon what paſſes there, you do nothing. Chriſt tells you of murder, and adultery, without the outward acts of thoſe ſins; and if there is anger, or uncleanneſs, or any evil motions and deſires abiding in the heart, his law ſtrikes at them as well as outward ſin; and if we do not ſearch and condemn ourſelves for all ſin, both ſecret and open, we ſhall make but lame work of our confeſſion. What is the reaſon that many are ſo blind to themſelves, think ſo little of the neceſſity of forgiveneſs, and entertain ſuch low and unworthy notions of the greatneſs of our redemption by Chriſt, but becauſe they are wilfully ignorant of the extent and purity of the law in every part of it, either making no account of their duty to God, and ſins againſt the firſt table, which certainly are not leſs than others, or tracing none up to the heart, where God looks for them, and according to the ſtate of it judges every man's condition?

2. If you would have the comfort of knowing that you are ſincere with God and your ſouls in your repentance and confeſſion of ſin, go over the ſeveral ſtages, or parts of your lives, and conſider what you have done, and how you have behaved in each of them, as child or parent, maſter or ſervant, huſband or wife, together with the ſins you are moſt liable to from your conſtitution, or particular calling, and do this likewiſe with the commandments

mandments in your hand, and with a ſtrict regard to that rule. Remember, the point is whether your ſins ſhall be covered or not; imputed or not imputed; all forgiven, or all ſtanding out in full force againſt you, at the hour of death, and the day of judgment; and no helps for coming at the knowledge of them muſt be ſlighted. If there is no forgiveneſs of ſins but by a full and free confeſſion of them, and if you truly deſire it, you will ſearch for them every where, and in every part of your lives, as carefully as you would for a thief, who you knew was lurking in your houſe to rob and murder you.

3. Call to mind thoſe awakening awful words which ſtand at the head of the ten commandments, and have them deeply imprinted in your hearts—"I am the Lord thy God." Whoſe authority do you deſpiſe, whoſe law do you break, whoſe will do you rebel againſt, when you venture upon the commiſſion of ſin? The will and law of that God, whoſe creature and ſervant you are, who made you for obedience, and ſtrictly requires it at your hands, who has revealed himſelf to you as a God terrible in judgment, and forewarned you that contempt of him and his law will expoſe you to his heavy diſpleaſure, and bring inconceivable and everlaſting miſery on your ſoul and body. Let not this part of ſcripture be always a dead letter to you; but if you would know the curſe and exceeding great evil of ſin, and what cauſe you have to confeſs and lament your own before God, aſk yourſelves, what was it that turned Adam out of

paradiſe, and brought death into the world? What was it that drowned the earth with its inhabitants? What was it that deſtroyed Sodom and Gomorrah? What was it that crucified the Lord of Glory? And again, when you hear the words, "I am the Lord thy God," think who it is that made and preſerves you, and ſurrounds you with his benefits, whoſe bread you eat, whoſe ſun ſhines upon you, whoſe rain waters your fields, whoſe providence continually watches over you, whoſe love follows you from the cradle to the grave, whoſe arms and boſom you lie in, at whoſe will you draw every breath, who gave his only begotten Son to ſave you from the curſe and ruin of your ſin, and hath provided an eternity of happineſs for you; and this will ſhew you the meaning of David's expreſſion, the WICKEDNESS of my ſin, in ſo ſtrong a light, and every act of diſobedience will look ſo great in your own eyes, that you will think no acknowledgment, confeſſion, or humiliation, can come up to the height of it.

And farther, if you would take knowledge of theſe words, "I am the Lord thy God," and ſuffer them to have their full force upon your minds, it would be an excellent means to bring you to the ſincere confeſſion of *all* ſin. For one ſin is as much ſin againſt God as another; and if you truly confeſs any one for this reaſon, you will think yourſelf bound for the ſame reaſon to confeſs all; that is, as I have already obſerved to you, with repentance, and an unfeigned purpoſe to forſake them. You may not have been ſo happy all your lives

lives as to ſay with reſpect to every ſin, as Joſeph did, "how can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God;" but if you would find mercy from the Lord, there muſt now be an end of your guile, and vain attempts to hide your ſin from him; you muſt now ſay, and upon examination you will find cauſe to ſay it with reſpect to the breach of every one of the commandments—"I *have* done this great wickedeneſs, and ſinned againſt God, againſt the majeſty and ſovereignty of the juſt and holy Lord God, my maker, preſerver, governor, and judge; woe is me, for I am undone; I will acknowledge my wickedneſs, and be ſorry for my ſin; Lord, have mercy on me for what is paſt, and for the time to come incline my heart to keep thy whole law."

4. But there is yet another help in this caſe to be mentioned, becauſe without it all the reſt will be ineffectual, and that is prayer: Prayer to know the God with whom we have to do; prayer to know ourſelves; prayer to ſee our ſin, to know how vile it makes us, and that we ſhall be extremely and for ever miſerable, if it is not confeſſed, forſaken, and forgiven. "For this," ſays David, "ſhall every one that is godly," that is, every one who has regard to God, and deſires to live and die in his favour, "make his prayer unto thee," namely, to have the wickedneſs of his ſin forgiven. And in order to this he will likewiſe pray for a ſpirit without guile, to know himſelf for what he is, nothing but a ſinner; that upon an humble confeſſion and acknowledgment

of his condition, without diſguiſe or extenuation, he may find deliverance from his guilt and miſery, and be refreſhed with a ſenſe of forgiveneſs. Conſider how apt we are to deny, excuſe, or palliate our ſins, and what pains we take to hide them from ourſelves; nay, how hard they are to be truly known, inſomuch that if the Spirit does not convince us of them, they will always be concealed from us, as to their number, guilt, and heinouſneſs, and your firſt prayer to God will be to have them diſcovered to you. If you dread them as your greateſt enemies, and the wall of ſeparation between God and you, till they are known and confeſſed, your cry will be, "try me, O God, and ſeek the ground of my heart, prove me, and examine my thoughts;" and if you do not thus pray, you trifle with your ſouls, and can have no proof to give of your ſincerity. Elihu's advice to Job was, to ſay, "that which I ſee not, teach thou me;" and he took the advice, and was taught it. As great a ſaint as he was, he ſaw his own ſin, and all ſin as he had never done before. "Now," ſays he, upon the full conviction he had received of the greatneſs, majeſty, and purity of God, and the vileneſs of man, "mine eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes."

Let me now remind you of the firſt words of the exhortation which is appointed to be read in the morning and evening ſervice, before the general confeſſion; and I pray God you may now and always ſeriouſly attend to it, and conſider it in your

your hearts: "Dearly beloved brethren, the ſcripture moveth us in ſundry places to acknowledge and confeſs our manifold ſins and wickedneſs, and that we ſhould not diſſemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God, our heavenly Father; but confeſs them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, to the end that we may obtain forgiveneſs of the ſame by his infinite goodneſs and mercy." Is it, indeed, true that we may obtain forgiveneſs? What, of ſin, one act of which brought death into the world? Forgiveneſs of our numberleſs ſins? May we hope for it? Are we aſſured of it? Yes, from the mouth of God himſelf, over and over again; and when the penitent ſoul preſents itſelf before him with this confeſſion, "I have ſinned againſt the Lord," the anſwer of all ſcripture is, "the Lord hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not die." Acknowledge, confeſs your ſins, hide them not, and tho' they are more in number than the hairs of your heads, the wickedneſs of them ſhall be forgiven. It would have been a grievous thing if we had been left in a ſtate of uncertainty whether we ſhall ever find mercy at God's hands; and his judgments upon ſin and ſinners, recorded in ſcripture, are very terrible to think of. But nevertheleſs we know they are his judgments upon the obſtinate, impenitent, and unbelieving. The thunder of them rolls innocently over the heads of the humble and contrite; and that one ſaying is worth a world, "if we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs." 1 *John* i. 9.

You think I preach ſtrict doctrine to you, and I fear make it a pretence for diſregarding it, and continuing unawakened, to the great hazard of your ſouls. My brethren, the truth is ſtrict, and if I conceal it, or diminiſh any thing from it, it is at the peril of my own ſoul as well as yours. We *are* ſinners; we have ſins innumerable, and, if they are not known and confeſſed, they will ruin us for ever. This is the truth of ſcripture, and what you muſt all come to, think and ſay what you pleaſe. But I beſeech you to hear me a word more. Do I ever tell you of your ſin, the guilt and danger of it, without telling you of your remedy, and pointing out to you the precious means of your ſafety? Do I not conſtantly preach Chriſt to you, as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſin of the world;" and declare to you from time to time that the aſſurance of your pardon is ſealed to you in his blood? And is this ſtrict? Is it not very comfortable? Is it not enough to make the heart of a condemned ſinner leap for joy, to hear that "God laid on him the iniquity of us all, and that there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus?" Is not this a more bleſſed relief to the conſcience, diſtreſſed with a ſenſe of guilt, than putting you upon the hard ſervice of undoing the accurſed effects of your ſin, and making your peace with God as well as you can, by any repentance, humblings, endeavours, or works of your own? Are not thoſe ſweet words which I have already brought to your remembrance, "if we confeſs our ſins," in truth and ſincerity before God, "he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins?"

ſins ?" That is, he is, and cannot but be faithful to his word and promiſe; and moreover true to juſtice, which is now brought over to our ſide, and engaged by covenant to grant the forgiveneſs which Chriſt has purchaſed for us.

It was the ſaying of one, who had a deep inſight into the corruption of human nature and the guilt of ſin, that he would creep upon his hands and knees to Jeruſalem for a pardon, if there was no other way to obtain it. You need not go ſo far; the glad tidings of peace with God are brought home to your doors, and it is your own fault if you do not receive them into your hearts, and live and die in the comfort of them; and I would now remind you of this, as another excellent means and help, if not of all others the beſt, to come at the bottom of your ſin, and engage you thoroughly in the work of ſearching for it in life and heart. In the examination of yourſelves call in faith to your aid. See your ſin pardoned in Chriſt, and you will be the leſs afraid to ſee it in all its guilt, to confeſs it ſincerely, mourn over it with godly ſorrow, and for his ſake reſolve to renounce it. It was another ſaying of the ſame perſon, no leſs a man than Martin Luther, that he always hated the word *repentance* till he underſtood the meaning of that text, *Rom.* i. 17. " therein," in and by the Goſpel, " is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the juſt ſhall live," live becauſe made juſt, " by faith;" as I ſaid before, it would have been a great diſcouragement in the way of ſelf-

ſearching,

ſearching, if we did not know before-hand that it would turn to account, and had been left in a ſtate of uncertainty as to the iſſue of it; as we muſt for ever have been, if we had nothing to truſt to but the merit of our own repentance: But when Chriſt is preſented to our faith as the peace-maker in his blood, and we can boldly bid defiance to ſin in the ſtrength of his atonement, we ſhall no longer be diſpoſed to deal deceitfully with God and our conſciences, or deſire to hide our inquities, as knowing that Chriſt bore them one and all in his own body on the croſs, and that forgiveneſs waits upon the humble, penitent acknowledgment of them.

There is a legal or natural, and a ſpiritual or evangelical repentance: One proceeds from a dread of puniſhment, rather than ſenſe of the great evil and odious nature of ſin; is perpetually haunted with unbelieving fears, continues in the main as averſe to God and goodneſs as ever, and produces no real change, or laſting reformation: The other, beholding the curſe of ſin, and the mercy of deliverance from it, in the death of Chriſt, fights reſolutely againſt it as ſin, ſpares none, deſires to lay it all down at the feet of the Saviour, and, in the ſenſe of his love, is as willing to be releaſed from the bondage as the penalty of it. One is before the croſs of Chriſt, and, with the help of God, may in time bring us up to it; but the other only, which begins from it, is ſincere, faithful, abiding, and lays the axe to the root of ſin. Believe therefore in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as your peace, your righteouſneſs.

righteouſneſs, and life, thank God for giving you the victory through him, and you will enter upon a ſtate of unfeigned humiliation; call your ways to remembrance, and hide nothing from him. If mercy is ſweet to you, as the very thing you want from God, it will put you upon the moſt vigorous endeavours to ſecure it, perfect your repentance, and keep you cloſe to Chriſt in the work he binds upon you, from the ſacred conſideration of his love. At the ſame time that you read your forgiveneſs in his croſs, you will ſee the accurſed nature of ſin in his death for it, God's vengeance againſt it, and the extreme danger of your condition, if it is not confeſſed and repented of. You will be the bleſſed of the Lord, the men and women "in whoſe ſpirits there is no guile;" not becauſe you are free from all ſpot of ſin in yourſelves, for then you would have no unrighteouſneſs to be forgiven, or ſin to be covered, and not imputed; but becauſe you are in ſome meaſure naked and open to yourſelves as you are to God, acknowledge the guilt and damnableneſs of all ſin, and the reality and greatneſs of your own, fly to the mercy of God in Chriſt for redemption from it, receive your pardon with a feeling heart, and a melting eye, and reſolve to keep mercy, by endeavouring, as God ſhall enable you, to purge yourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.

But if you think this is ſtrict, and will have mercy in you own way, though you hide and keep your ſins, I dare not deny the Bible, or flatter you to your ruin; your blood will be upon

your own heads; the whole truth of God is againſt you; and when you come to appear before Chriſt at the day of judgment, you will find, to your everlaſting confuſion, that he has not forgotten his words, though you do—*repent, or periſh.* From all blindneſs and hardneſs of heart, good Lord, deliver us; and bring every ſoul here preſent before thy mercy-ſeat, ſprinkled with the blood of the holy Jeſus, in the true ſpirit of this prayer:

Almighty and everlaſting God, who hateſt nothing that thou haſt made, and doſt forgive the ſins of all them that are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our ſins and acknowledging our wretchedneſs, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remiſſion and forgiveneſs, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON II.

ISAIAH, Chap. ix. ver. 6.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder.

THE ſeven firſt verſes of this chapter, of which the text is a part, are a very remarkable and expreſs prophecy of Chriſt, above ſeven hundred years before his coming; and cannot, without great force, be applied to any thing but the ſpiritual deliverance, and complete ſalvation wrought by him. And well might the Prophet ſpeak of it as matter of great rejoicing to mankind, and compare it, as he does, to ſignal victory over powerful enemies, or the deliverance of captives from the darkneſs of a dungeon, and the horrors of death, to the enjoyment of liberty, and the comforts of full day-light. Every diligent and ſerious reader of ſcripture will make proper reflections upon theſe compariſons, and be led by them to conſider the alteration made by Chriſt in the condition and circumſtances of mankind. For in truth, ſtriking and lively as they are, they fall ſhort of the reality, and are but a faint reſemblance of our natural darkneſs, miſery, and captivity in ſin, and reſtoration to light, freedom, and happineſs in Jeſus Chriſt, the child who is here ſaid to be born, and the ſon given unto us.

The former part of the verſe, which I have now read to you, will find us work enough at this time; and may God enable us to fathom the depth of theſe bleſſed words, and receive the full benefit of them in our knowledge of the Saviour, experience of him in all his offices and characters, as he is here deſcribed, and happy deliverance by him. The words, "unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder," will afford great cauſe of rejoicing to all thoſe whoſe hearts the Lord opens to receive them, if we conſider,

I. What is implied in the expreſſion, "unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given."

II. The nature and value of the gift.

III. For whom it is intended.

IV. The characters of thoſe who receive it; ſignified to us in theſe words, "the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder."

I. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given." I would deſire your attention to the word *given*. When the prophet had ſaid, "unto us a child is born," he was directed by the Spirit to ſay further, "unto us a ſon is *given*;" that we might know and conſider it as the free gift of God to us, from the bowels of his own mercy.—When we remember that the child who was born unto us was his own Son, we ſee at once, that we

we could have no right to ſuch a favour, no power to purchaſe it, no thought or expectation of it. It is a moſt aſtoniſhing inſtance of God's goodwill to mankind, and pity for them in their loſt condition.—Our lives and the ſupport of them, the bread we eat, the air we breathe, the ſun that ſhines upon us, all we have, enjoy, or hope for, is the gift and bounty of God to us. And we are further aſſured by his word, that, unworthy as we are of the leaſt of his mercies, "our heavenly Father" is always "ready to give good things to them that aſk him." But that he ſhould give his own Son to take our fleſh, that in it he might redeem us from the curſe we were under, and reſtore us to life and immortality, is ſuch a token and pledge of his love to us, as far exceeds all our thoughts, and all our praiſes. The angels, we are told, deſire to look into it, as if the greatneſs of the myſtery was too high for their underſtandings, wiſe as they are, and engaged their attention and admiration beyond any thing that they knew of God.—But ſo far we ourſelves may know and underſtand, that as God gave his Son, and he freely gave himſelf for us; ſo our condition muſt be deſperate for any thing we could do to help ourſelves; and that if we do not receive the precious gift at his hands with all humility and thankfulneſs, we muſt be left to periſh irrecoverably.—God can do no more for us, he has not another Son to give us.—O Jeſus, the eternal Son of God! that thou mighteſt be given, and give thyſelf to us, thou didſt not abhor the virgin's womb.—To help and to ſave us, thou waſt

contented

contented to become a man like one of us, and to be the greateſt ſufferer that ever appeared in our nature.—For thou was not only a child born unto us, but a Son given unto us, to be the price of our ranſom, and deliver us from death, by giving thyſelf up to an accurſed death in our ſtead!

II. Which leads me to conſider the nature or value of the gift.—My brethren, it is Chriſt himſelf, in what he did and ſuffered for us; living, dying, and riſing again, that we might be made "the righteouſneſs of God in him." To ſpeak more plainly, if poſſible, he was our peace-maker and Saviour in and of himſelf, only and altogether in his own perſon, ſingly conſidered; and not by any thing he does in us, or enables us to do for ourſelves, as if we had any ſhare or fellow-helpers with him in the great work of our redemption.—"I will give thee," ſaith God, "for a covenant of the people," that as all fell and died in Adam, when he brake the covenant which God made with him, and with all mankind in his loins, ſo Chriſt was to be the head of a covenant of reſtoration by grace, and the author of life and righteouſneſs to all that belong to him, ſolely by virtue of his own act and deed, and not by the help and concurrence of any other, man or angel. He is life, righteouſneſs, victory, peace, and ſalvation; inſomuch, that by denying him the whole glory of it, and refuſing to receive him as a gift from God by faith, we run the hazard of loſing it altogether; and, by pretending to be our own Saviours,

viours, make God a liar, as St. John faithfully, but ſeverely, expreſſes it. "For this," ſays he, "is the record"—the teſtimony and word of truth, and the glory of all ſcripture—"that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." In the *Son*, becauſe, as God, he has life in himſelf; and, therefore, as all life was from him at firſt, ſo when it was loſt, it could only be given and reſtored in and through him.

We are miſerable miſtakers of the great grace of God in Chriſt, and of the nature and value of his gift to us, when we ſuppoſe that it could ever become a debt to us by any thing we can do to deſerve it, or contributing in the leaſt towards it.—As you would be believers, rejoicing in the hope and comfort of the goſpel, never give way to this proud preſumptuous thought.—The ſcripture requires no ſuch thing at your hands, for you could as ſoon make a world; but tells you, as plainly as words can do, that it is Chriſt, "who of God is made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption."—Conſider what your condition was, and what was to be done for your recovery from it, and you will be convinced at once, that it muſt be as the Prophet ſays, "his own arm brought ſalvation to him," not for himſelf; he did not need it; but to him *for us*. And it is a marvellous opening of his gracious heart towards us, that he would ſpeak of what he did for our ſakes, as if it had been wrought for himſelf. We are under a ſentence of death by the ſin of our firſt parents, as well as our own numberleſs, actual tranſgreſſions; Can you make full

ſatisfaction

ſatisfaction to the eternal truth and juſtice of God, and ſtay his hand from executing the puniſhment he has once decreed? The law he has given us, and by which we are to be judged, is a law of abſolute perfection; can you fulfil it? Can we, who are by nature dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, work out ſuch a righteouſneſs of ourſelves, as will enſure our title to heaven? Our loſt inheritance is to be recovered; our ſouls muſt be qualified for it, by being renewed to the image of God, and our bodies raiſed out of our graves to take poſſeſſion of it.—Can you do this by any might or power of your own, or by any ability which God giveth, when you have done all you can, and the very beſt you ever will do? When you put your ſouls to it to anſwer theſe queſtions, with this rule in your hands, and ſcripture-knowledge in your head, "that the Lord is a God of judgment, and will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips," and that his law, once broken, gives you up to death, you will perceive that no after-endeavours, no will, work, or holineſs of our own, can deliver us from its curſe, or recover the life we have forfeited.

Behold then what you muſt do; underſtand what chriſtian knowledge and belief is; and the very point in which your ſafety lies.—When the queſtion is aſked, Who ſhall revoke the ſentence of death we are under, and ſtop the execution of our deſerved puniſhment? The man who is inſtructed out of the word of God can anſwer, and ſay, *Jeſus*. He came down from heaven on purpoſe

poſe that he might take our curſe upon himſelf, and ſuffer the whole weight of divine vengeance in our ſtead; he is "the Lamb of God" that was offered in ſacrifice to take away the ſin of the world, and make ſatisfaction to juſtice in his own perſon.—When it is aſked, who ſhall preſent us to God clear waſhed from all ſpot of ſin, and in the white raiment of a pure and perfect righteouſneſs? The anſwer of faith is, *Jeſus*. He is the revealed righteouſneſs of God; in him only it is to be found, and it was wrought by him, not for himſelf, but to the end that it might be conveyed and aſſured to us through him.—When it is aſked, who ſhall create our ſouls anew to the image of God, raiſe our bodies from the grave, and ſet us, ſoul and body, at God's right hand? The anſwer of ſcripture is, *Jeſus*; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he is the quickening ſpirit of our ſouls, he was delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification; he conquered death for us, and carried our nature triumphantly into heaven; where believers are expreſsly ſaid to be with him, raiſed together, and to have their life hid with Chriſt in God.—All this comes and is done to our hands by *Jeſus*.—It is the might, glory, and great ſalvation of the child that was born, of the Son that was given unto us; not our own act in any ſenſe, much or little, nor to be aſcribed to us, in whole or in part, any more than the dividing of the red ſea to the Iſraelites.—When they ſaw God had divided it for them, they could enter into it, paſs through it as on dry land, and ſing praiſes to him for the wonders of their deliverance; and

this was all that they could do.—So may we, beholding the way which God has made for us to eſcape, cry to Jeſus in the danger of our ſouls, be ſure of help in his ſtrength, and praiſe God with all our hearts for redemption from ſin, death, and hell: And why ſhould we be ſo fooliſh as to think of doing any more? Alas! why ſhould we lay a burden upon ourſelves, which God knows we cannot bear, and therefore has in great mercy given his Son to bear it for us? Be inſtructed. Be wiſe unto ſalvation. If we believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved. But then know what it is to believe in him.—It is going out of ourſelves to Chriſt, upon the call of God in his word; receiving him as a gift, and the ſole author of our ſalvation.—This is the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, when we can apply Chriſt to it for healing. This is a bleſſed eaſe to the heart in all its diſtreſſes, and the anchor of the ſoul ſure and ſtedfaſt, when our fears run high, and ſin has raiſed a ſtorm within us.—And if we had the divine ſkill of grounding ourſelves on Chriſt for peace, inſtead of looking for it in ourſelves, or in any thing that we do, we might be freed from a world of perplexities, go on our way rejoicing, and be happy all the day long in the faith and hope of the goſpel.

I know that what I am ſaying, can ſignify nothing to thoſe who never were troubled for ſin, are blind to it in themſelves, and in no concern about the means of their deliverance. All ſuch will hear it with ſtupid indifference.—But to thoſe who know

know their guilt and condemnation, it is a moſt wholeſome doctrine, and very full of comfort; and that one ſaying of Chriſt is worth a world to a burdened ſoul, "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt."—It matters not how you came by this faith, whether all at once, or by reading and meditating on the ſcripture, or by the preaching of the word, or by firmly retaining what you have been taught from your childhood.—But have it you muſt, and hold it faſt, as your hope in life and death.—For you can only be chriſtians by knowing and believing that Chriſt has done for you, what you could never do for yourſelves, embracing him as a gift from God, juſt as you would an eſtate to which you have no title, or releaſe from a ſentence of death; underſtanding the value of it, and rejoicing at your hearts to hear theſe words of the Prophet, "unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon is given."

III. You are now to hear for whom this gift is intended. For ſinners; for the miſerable ſons of Adam over the face of the whole earth;—for all and every one of us.—So runs the proclamation from the court of heaven; "Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price;" ſignifying unto us, that it is richly worth our while to buy the goſpel milk and wine, food and gladneſs for our ſouls at any rate, and at the ſame time that we have nothing to buy them with,

but muſt take them freely, as they are freely offered to us.—St. Paul ſays, " When we were without ſtrength, Sinners, Enemies, Ungodly, *Chriſt died for us.*" Surely, I ſay, this takes in all, and is good warrant for our believing, that as there is no exception in the text, none was intended. *Unto us*, is unto all; and God be thanked that the gift is as large and general, as it is free and gracious.

There is no room for any to ſay they do not want it; and they who ſwell with conceit on account of ſome goodneſs or excellence, which they think they have above others, are nevertheleſs abominable in the ſight of God, and as much undone without it, as the meaneſt of thoſe whom they deſpiſe.—On the other hand, there is no room for any to think they may not have it.—Let their ſins be ever ſo many and great, Chriſt took them all upon himſelf, and God offers him to them, as their ranſom, ſurety, and peace-maker in his blood.—To *them* this child was born, to *them* this ſon was given.

My brethren, theſe are glad tidings to you from the Lord; and would to God they might ſound ſweetly into all your hearts.—Let me ſay to every one that hears me this day, " and now why tarrieſt thou, ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, calling on the name of the Lord." You were baptized without your knowledge; but for the love of God, make it your own act and deed, now that you are come to years of underſtanding.

You

You were baptized into Chriſt for the remiſſion of ſins; therefore build not your hopes of acceptance upon any outward advantages, any kind of life, or form of religion, how exact ſoever, if you never were inwardly ſtirred up by the knowledge of God and yourſelves, to receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as a gift from him, and your only refuge from the guilt that is upon your ſouls. Thouſands and tens of thouſands are loſt for ever with a fair character, becauſe they depended upon the outward viſible ſign, put it in the place of Chriſt, and would not know a want of him, to cover their ſins, and be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.

Neither, if your life is viſibly bad, and your ſins notorious, let this thought hinder you from turning to God, that your caſe is deſperate, and your work ſo great that you know not where to begin it.—If it was your own work to ſatisfy for your ſins, and blot them out of God's book, you might well deſpair.—But in Chriſt you have full relief from this tormenting thought, and all the encouragement you can deſire to come unto God by him.—Before you were born, and before the world was made, he was appointed of God to do this great thing for you.—And in the fulneſs of time he came into the world to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, to call ſinners to repentance, to bear their ſins in his own body, to pluck them out of the hands of the devil, to redeem them from death, to make them children of God, and joint heirs with him in his kingdom in heaven.—This

you

you cannot but ſee is evidently a gift, and not man's work, whether ſaint or ſinner; and your heart ſhould leap with joy to think that, whoever you are, it may be your own.—And whatever he requires us to do for ourſelves, he will enable us to perform by ſtrength from above.—For ſomething he does require of all who will be his diſciples; and ſave none but thoſe who come to him for the bleſſing of a new heart, as well as the forgiveneſs of their ſins, and are willing to be delivered both from the guilt and power of them.—That we may not, therefore, miſtake our privilege, and reject this gift, let us conſider,

IV. The character of thoſe who receive it; ſignified to us in theſe words, "the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder," for government implies ſubjection and obedience in the governed.—"The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord," and he has all power given him in heaven and earth, to the end he might teach and command us in the name of God, and make us a willing people, living by his rule, and ſerving him with freedom of ſpirit. Do not miſtake here upon the peril of your ſouls.—Chriſt is not the miniſter of ſin, nor the maſter of a lawleſs family.—He is not the head of whoremongers and adulterers, of ſots and drunkards, of liars, ſwearers, evil-ſpeakers, and ſabbath-breakers, nor of thoſe who live and die in the open breach of any of his commands.—To all ſuch he ſays, "he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill."

ſtill." If the ſinner will not be perſuaded, but is bent upon pleaſing himſelf, in oppoſition to the authority and commands of his Lord, let him go on in the ways of his own chooſing, and make his damnation ſure, by caſting the will of God behind his back.—But thou who calleſt thyſelf a chriſtian, and lookeſt for a reward at thy maſter's hands, be a faithful follower of him in truth and ſincerity, and by profeſſed ſubjection to him from a pure heart.

My brethren, you know in your own conſciences, that the word of God is as full for our holineſs under Chriſt, as the forgiveneſs of our ſins by him; and that you muſt make a blot of the whole Bible, before you can entertain a thought, that the grace of God, which bringeth ſalvation, does not teach us "to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world;" and if we will not be thus taught by it, but make light of this qualification, by refuſing to walk with him in the way which all his ſervants do, we muſt never "look for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt." For the government is upon his ſhoulder, that we may think ourſelves well and happy under it, and receive a full bleſſing from it, in the duty and loyalty of our hearts to him; and he ſaves none but thoſe who take him for their Lord and King to reign over them.

All

All he did and ſuffered to deliver us from the condemnation of ſin, ſhews the heinous, accurſed nature of it, God's abhorrence of it, and vengeance againſt it, in ſo ſtrong a light, that we muſt be blinded to the wiſh of Satan, and led captive by him at his will, if we do not ſee the neceſſity of forſaking it.—This then is the character and neceſſary qualification of all that belong to Chriſt. If you would be owned by him as his diſciples, you muſt be ſubject to him in all things, faſhioning your hearts and lives continually by the rule of God's word.—The love of Chriſt conſtrains, the commands of Chriſt oblige you to obedience. There never was a more prevailing reaſon offered to the world, there cannot be a ſtronger bond laid upon the heart of man, for its grateful and willing ſubjection, than the love of God in giving his Son to die for us, and the love of Chriſt in offering himſelf to the ſtroke of juſtice in our ſtead. All, who are rooted and grounded in the faith of this love, feel the force of its drawing; and know what influence it has to keep their hearts and minds in Chriſt Jeſus; to keep them from all evil, in all good.—May the Lord get himſelf a name in this place, by increaſing the number of them; ſhew them more and more what a happy privilege it is to be renewed by Chriſt, to the deſire and love of holineſs; and to have their ſouls confirmed in his obedience, as well as refreſhed by his peace; what a glorious change it is in our condition, to be enabled, by the power of God's ſpirit, to offer him free-will offerings with a holy worſhip, and to abound in good works to the praiſe of the glory of his grace.

The

The child that was born, the ſon that was given, to ſave the ſouls of his people from death, ſays, "if ye love me keep my commandments;" and they know they cannot ſo much as deſire to be freed from their obligations to keep his laws, or take themſelves from under his government, without renouncing their intereſt in him, and rendering themſelves utterly unworthy of his regard.—In the belief of the great deliverance he has wrought for them, they come to the bleſſed Sacrament, both to have the pardon of their ſins aſſured and conveyed to them, and to receive ſtrength from it to live as becomes the diſciples of the holy Jeſus. Whilſt thoſe who pretend to believe in him, and yet make no conſcience of obeying him, who have not ſo much as the form and appearance of his religion, and live in the neglect of this his peculiar, ſacred command, which is our ſecurity for keeping all the reſt, can have no hope or expectation of any benefit from him; but, inſtead thereof, ſubject themſelves to that heavy doom, which he has forewarned them of, "as for theſe mine enemies which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring hither, and ſlay them before me."

The Lord open your eyes before it be too late, and draw you to the Saviour in mercy and loving kindneſs, that you may rejoice before God in the comfort of theſe words, and ſay with one mind, and one mouth, "unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder." We are thine, O Jeſus!

bought with thy blood, and thee we will ſerve.—Even ſo, Lord Jeſus, may we all give ourſelves to thee, with obedient thankful hearts, for the gift of thyſelf to us.—Take us into thyſelf, and take poſſeſſion of us by thy Spirit, to the glory of God the Father; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, be honour, praiſe, and thankſgiving for ever and ever.

SERMON

SERMON III.

ISAIAH, chap. ix. ver. 6.

And his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace.

OUR Lord has a great variety of names given him in ſcripture, in order to ſet forth more fully the glory of his perſon, or explain the nature of our redemption by him. *Jeſus* is the Saviour: *Chriſt* is the Lord's *anointed*, in all his offices of King, Prieſt, and Prophet; *Immanuel* is God with us, not only in work, power, and mercy, but God in our fleſh. He is called "the true God and eternal life," as the reſtorer of it to mankind when it was loſt: The "ſecond man," or "laſt Adam," with a view to his aboliſhing the curſe brought upon us by the firſt: The "great Prophet:" The High Prieſt of our profeſſion: The Prince of the Kings of the earth:" With a multitude of others, above 260, (*ſee* FRANK's *Chriſtus Sacræ Scripturæ Nucleus*, *page* 234) to denote his Godhead or manhood, his character and offices; and all of them ſignificant of ſome benefit we receive by him. And here in the text he is called by no leſs than five names, "Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace:" The Prophet being directed by the Spirit of God to add one deſcription or character of

him after another; no one of them being ſufficient to expreſs fully what he is in himſelf, and all of them intended to raiſe our expectations of his being to us what he is called: For his names are therefore told us, that we may look for a ſuitable effect from them in ourſelves, and be bleſſed in every one of them. To the intent you may underſtand and conſider them, and ſecure your portion in them, I am, with God's help, to open them to you, and may he, who only *can*, open them to all our hearts.

1. The "child which is born, the ſon which is given us," and which I made the ſubject of my laſt diſcourſe, is called *Wonderful*. He is wonderful in his *perſon*, *acts*, and *operations*: In his *perſon*, God and man united; a child weeping in a cradle, and that a mean one, a manger in the ſtable of an Inn; and at the ſame time waited on as the Lord of heaven and earth by the multitude of the heavenly hoſt: Made not only lower than the angels, but debaſed in his worldly condition beneath the meaneſt of the ſons of men, though he was their maker, and the maker of all things, and had all the world at his diſpoſal: The giver of the law, and yet made of a woman, and made under the law, that he might be obedient to it, judged and condemned as a malefactor, himſelf the judge of quick and dead: A creature and the creator, born in time, and taking a body of our fleſh to ſuffer and die, when he was the ſon of God, bleſſed from all eternity: Not having where to lay his head, and lying in the boſom of the Father:

ther: The Saviour of mankind, and not ſaving himſelf: Dwelling among us as bone of our bone, veiling himſelf in a mortal body, and yet manifeſting his glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: Crucified in weakneſs, when he could have commanded more than twelve legions of angels to deliver him, and had power to raiſe his dead body from the grave, and aſcend with it up into heaven. And as he was thus wonderful in his *perſon*, uniting in it ſo many ſeeming contradictions, we ſhall find him no leſs ſo in his *acts* and *operations*, in his grace and power; not only by a miracle of good-will to us, taking our cauſe in hand, delivering us from death, and reconciling us to God when we were enemies to him; but alſo doing it in ſuch a manner as may juſtly excite our higheſt admiration, and entitle him to the name here given him by the Prophet.

Sin was to be puniſhed, and the ſinners ſpared. When no other in heaven or earth could do this, he ſaid, "lo! I come to do thy will, O God." By covenant with God he put himſelf in the place of ſinners, took their ſin and puniſhment upon himſelf, and ſuſtained the whole weight of God's vengeance againſt it in his ſoul and body. Death was to be ſuffered, and at the ſame time aboliſhed. Behold! he whoſe name is Wonderful did both. He conquered death by dying, and ſhut himſelf up in the grave that he might break the bars of that ſtrong priſon, riſe triumphantly from it, and open a way for all to follow him. Was not this wondrous grace, great love, almighty power?

Conſider

Conſider further: He was both the ſacrifice and the high-prieſt; the ranſom and the Redeemer; the purchaſer of our lives and the price of them; he was made ſin, and had no ſin; he pleaded as a malefactor at the bar of man's judgment, that man might be acquitted at his own; he was condemned, and gave himſelf up to his ſentence, that, by ſo doing, he might reverſe the ſentence of condemnation which was gone out againſt all fleſh; make faith to be righteouſneſs, and mankind, ſinners, no ſinners. If there is a taſk more difficult than any that has been mentioned, it is to bend the ſtubborn will of man; to humble his proud heart, and turn it to God; to perſuade us to be happy in the acceptance of his ſalvation; to create us anew to the image of God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, and prepare us for the heaven he has purchaſed for all that come unto God by him. And here alſo he is wonderful in operation: He makes his people willing in the day of his power; works this great change in the minds of believers; fulfils the ſecond character here given of him; and is received into their hearts as the,

2. *Counſellor.* You know he never gave, he cannot give up his right to this name. It would be to our unſpeakable damage. He is every way qualified for the office of our counſellor, and he muſt and will be our counſellor if ever we have any benefit by him. He has given us his *word* to be our guide, a light to our feet, the ſtar to lead us to ſaving-knowledge, and is always ſpeaking to us in it. It is his will declared to us for our direction in points of the greateſt concernment,

concernment, and his heart opened to us for our comfort. He is peculiarly called *the Word*, becauſe he ſpeaks and manifeſts to the world what would otherwiſe lie hid in the boſom of God, juſt as men's words make known their ſecret intentions. So he is our counſellor, reveals our duty, diſcovers the will of God to us with a clear light ſhining upon it from heaven, ſhews us the way of happineſs, adviſes and commands us to walk in it. But this is not all: What he teaches and counſels, he moreover enforces with his blood. He has done great things for us, which he would have remembered. We have mighty obligations to hearken to him in every thing he ſays. He comes cloſe to the heart with this weighty argument in his mouth, " if ye love me, keep my commandments." Surely, I ſay, in this reſpect he well deſerves the name; and if we have any touch or feeling of gratitude, it will be a prevailing reaſon with us, and a ſtrong bond upon our ſouls, to take him for our counſellor.

And if this is not ſufficient, as God knows we are very hard to work upon; if his word, urged home upon us with his bloody death for our ſakes, does not give him the preference to all other counſellors, he has ſtill a farther and moſt peculiar title to it, in the motions and drawings of his Spirit. He ſpeaks both without and within us, and tries all manner of ways to perſuade us to learn of him. He ſays, come to me, and at the ſame time inclines us to come, and as it were puſhes us forward. And tho' we turn a deaf ear to him day after

after day, and year after year, he is not like other counſellors, ſoon out of patience, but ſtrives on with our untoward wills, ſtands knocking at the door of our hearts, has his Spirit pleading for him within them, and bringing that voice continually to remembrance which came to him from heaven, "this is my beloved Son, hear ye him." Which we have the more reaſon to do, becauſe he is,

3. "The Mighty God." This name ſtands in the midſt, and looks backward and forward, giving ſtrength and influence to the two titles which go before, and the other two which follow it. If you aſk who it is that is called *Wonderful* and *Counſellor*, *the Everlaſting Father*, and *the Prince of Peace*, the anſwer is, it is *the Mighty God*. But to give this name a diſtinct conſideration, let us obſerve, that tho' the Child and Son, who is ſaid in the former part of the verſe to be born and given unto us, is not mentioned by name, yet it can be no other than our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſince no one elſe that ever was born, not the higheſt angel if he had come in our nature, could, without blaſphemy, be called the Mighty God. And if he is God, as this paſſage of ſcripture undeniably proves, the eternal Son of God, equal in glory and majeſty with the Father, then he is to be known and worſhipped as God; that, as he himſelf tells us, "All men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father;" binding the duty upon us of giving him the honour due unto his name, by aſſuring us farther that otherwiſe our belief and worſhip of God will be in vain;

becauſe,

becauſe, as he alſo ſays, "He that honoureth not the Son," with equal adoration according to the foregoing words, "honoureth not the Father which hath ſent him." *John* v. 23.

But there is, moreover, ſtrong conſolation in this name, and the moſt ſolid foundation that can poſſibly be laid for our faith and truſt in him, and the aſſurance of our conſciences, as to the merit and efficacy of all he did and ſuffered for our ſalvation. When our eyes are opened by the Spirit of God to ſee the miſery of our condition, and the greatneſs of our guilt, in the greatneſs of our ſin, it is no ſuch eaſy matter as unawakened perſons may imagine to believe in a pardon. In this caſe we are generally inclined to fear the worſt, in ſpite of all the encouragement that can be given us. One thing we are ſure of, that our condemnation is juſt; and when once we are perſuaded that God is our enemy, we find it exceeding difficult to believe that he can ever be reconciled to ſuch ſinners as we know ourſelves to be, and are very apt to be pleading againſt our own relief. Now, therefore, mark it well: Hear, thou poor diſtreſſed ſoul, whoſe fears are always returning, whoſe doubts nothing can ſilence, what comfort there is for thee, and for all who believe in this name. Who became thy ſurety, paid thy debt, and made full ſatisfaction to juſtice for thy ſin? "The Mighty God." Who ſhed his blood to redeem thy ſoul from death? Not a man like thy ſelf, not an angel from heaven,—this would not have ſet thy heart at eaſe, nor given reſt to thy

troubled thoughts,—but "the Mighty God." Who was thy ſacrifice on earth, and is always thy High-prieſt in heaven, offering and pleading that blood continually at the throne of grace on thy behalf? "The Mighty God." Who loved us with an everlaſting love, and took our nature upon him, that he might bring a perfect righteouſneſs into it, and preſent it ſpotleſs to the Father in his own perſon for our juſtification? "The Mighty God." If that word will not baniſh all our ſcruples, and ſtand againſt all our fears, when we are convinced of ſin, and ſo troubled for it as to be looking out every way for a remedy, I know not what will. Well might St. Paul tell the Corinthians, whoſe paſt ſins he mentions, and thoſe none of the leaſt, that they were "waſhed, ſanctified, juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus;" for he knew a good reaſon for what he ſaid, and could have told them, as he did the elders of the church of Epheſus, that the blood wherewith they were "purchaſed was the blood of God." *Acts* xx. 28. When, therefore, we have the grace given us to fly to Chriſt as a refuge in the day of our diſtreſs for ſin, you ſee what cauſe we have to diſcharge all our fears, and what ground to reſt our ſouls upon, in that name by which he is here called, and is from everlaſting, "the Mighty God:" For we cannot doubt but that his blood is ſufficient to purge the moſt defiled conſcience, and waſh out the deepeſt ſtains of the fouleſt heart.

When

When the Prophet had thus revealed the Child that was born, the Son that is given unto us, under his higheſt name and character of Mighty God, we may ſuppoſe he might well have ſtopped; but as he was directed to add two others, we may be ſure it was not in vain; and that we ſhall find farther inſtruction in his fourth name of

4. "Everlaſting Father." But is he not always in ſcripture called the Son, as the ſecond perſon in the Godhead, in diſtinction from the Father? How comes it to paſs then that he is here called by a name which does not ſeem of right to belong to him, viz. "the Everlaſting Father?" Why, not in reſpect of his Godhead, or his place and order in it, but on account of the relation he bears to us in his human nature; and it is worth our while to underſtand the meaning of this name, and why he is here called by it. We know by woful experience whoſe children we are by nature; that we die for the ſin of our firſt parent; are born heirs of his corruption, and liable to eternal death; as the root is, ſo are the branches, ſo is the fruit, in the courſe and order of nature. When Adam had brought a curſe upon his ſoul and body by ſin, there was a neceſſity for its being derived to all that ſprung from him. When he had loſt his true life, the image of God in his ſoul, he had none to tranſmit to his poſterity; neither can we by any acts or endeavours of our own reſtore it to ourſelves, or recover our forfeited inheritance: For this knowledge of ourſelves we are beholden to ſcripture, and a melancholy account of our con-

dition it is; but God be thanked it is not deſperate; we learn from thence what we are by one Father, let us now ſee what we may be by another.

Chriſt ſays, ſpeaking of himſelf according to the expreſſion in the text, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." *Heb.* ii. 13. He then is the new Father of his people, and ſtands to them exactly in the ſame relation for life that Adam did for death. We are clearly told, that as in one all died, ſo in the other all ſhall be made alive. 1 *Cor.* xv. 22. And his name of "Everlaſting Father" will help us to conceive the manner how this is done. By being grafted into Chriſt, the true Vine, we, as his branches, are of the ſame condition with the root and ſtock, live and bear fruit in him. *John* xv. "We are members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones." He takes us into the cloſeſt union with himſelf; and when we are ſo "joined to the Lord," in faith, as to be "one ſpirit with him," 1 *Cor.* vi. 17. our deſcent is no longer to be reckoned from the firſt Adam, the author of ſin and death, but from Chriſt the ſecond Father of us all, in reſpect of righteouſneſs and life.

The Prophet ſays, "the Everlaſting Father;" for ſo he was in the eternal grant and decree of God before the firſt man was made; "according to his own purpoſe and grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus before the world began. 2 *Tim.* i. 9. And in whom we are "begotten again to a lively hope by his reſurrection from the dead."

1 *Peter*

1 *Peter* i. 3. You ſee, therefore, what a precious myſtery is contained in his name of "Everlaſting Father," and how it is to be unfolded. There is one more name ſtill remaining to be well conſidered by us; for that he who is called "Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father," is alſo,

5. "The Prince of Peace." The Prince of Peace in his eternal nature as God; the meſſenger of God's peace to a world of rebels and enemies, and the purchaſe of it with his blood, moving the heart to ſeek after it, and ſealing it to the conſcience by his Spirit; creating a diſpoſition to concord, and univerſal good-will to men, in every ſoul where he dwells, from a ſenſe of peace with God, and reigning over obedient ſubjects, and lovers of peace, when it was a ſtranger upon earth; and men, by being enemies to God, were at enmity amongſt themſelves, "living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." He, by the appointment and will of God, took upon himſelf the office of Peace-maker; and when he came down from heaven to put his hand to the work, he was uſhered into the world by the multitude of the heavenly hoſt, with the ſong of praiſe exactly ſuited to the great deſign of his coming, "Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." Through him God was reconciled to men, and men to God and to one another. And when he might have come to judge the world, and execute God's vengeance upon it for ſin, he came peaceably; yea, as the Prince of Peace, loaded,

loaded, as I may ſay, with bleſſings from above, with the offer of heaven in his hand, and the offer of his help to prepare us for it, and conduct us happily thither. Mercy and truth, righteouſneſs and peace firſt met together and kiſſed each other in his perſon, and then they could join together in a league of friendſhip on our behalf, who had before ſet them at variance, and divided them as far aſunder as the eaſt is from the weſt.

You know, my brethren, how Chriſt wrought our peace, and what it coſt him: That he offered his ſoul and body to the ſtroke of heaven's juſtice, that we might never feel the dreadful ſeverity of it in our own perſons. You know he took up our ſins, and took them away, by "nailing them to his croſs, ſo making peace." If you are chriſtians, by chriſtian belief and inſtruction from the Bible, you know that as we were enemies to God by wicked works, he would always have been an enemy to us, and we muſt have lain for ever under the ſentence and curſe of the law, if Chriſt had not been made a curſe for us, and eſtabliſhed our peace upon ſure grounds by the righteouſneſs of his life, and the ſufferings of his death. You are told from the mouth of God, and are hearing continually from this place, that "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins;" and that, "being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." And would to God you were rooted and grounded in this peace, valuing it as the treaſure of your ſouls, and all walking with God as dear children

children in the comfort of it! For I would begin my exhortation from this name, though it is the laſt-mentioned.

1. Chriſt offers himſelf to be known by you under his character of "Prince of Peace." He does not want a name of honour, or an empty title for himſelf; he would be known to you in the power of it. For his names are all life and power; and he calls upon, and invites you this day to receive and rejoice in the grace and mercy of his peace. Know your want of it; value it, pray for it, hold it faſt as your title to the joys of heaven. Do not think to make amends for a broken law, or patch up a deceitful peace with God by any works or doings of your own. They are neceſſary in their time and place; and when you are "God's workmanſhip, created to them in Chriſt Jeſus," he will make them good works, and know how to reward them: But your firſt great work is to ſeek after his peace, knowing that you are undone without it; and to pray for it as a gift from him, which you have not the leaſt ſhadow of a right or title to in yourſelves. If you know not this; if you are not grounded in this faith, and do not pray for God's peace in Chriſt as for your lives, deceive yourſelves no longer. You are not in the way of life. You are not chriſtians. A ſmooth, civil life, if it was much better than it is, and with a form of religion added to it, does not make you ſo. Chriſt's peace you want, and his peace you muſt have, or have no peace for ever. It muſt be all in all to you, gladly received, and welcome to your

your hearts, as a pardon to one under a ſentence of death. Senſe of your want of it, and cordial, joyful acceptance of it, is the very thing which proves you believers, and out of the reach of condemnation. It muſt be the beginning and end of all you do; and if this foundation is not laid in you, whatever elſe you do, you are building upon the ſand, and great will be your diſappointment in a day of trial. O Jeſus! thou Prince of Peace! glorious is this thy name for loſt ſinners. Have mercy on us, and apply it to our hearts, in all the virtue, ſtrength, and comfort of it.

2. Again, what is Chriſt to you in his other names; and, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, what uſe do you put him to? He is *wonderful* in himſelf, and in all he did and ſuffered; but do you deſire and truſt to find him ſo to you? Working the great miracle of your converſion, freeing you from the guilt and bondage of ſin, giving you new wills to fear, to love, to praiſe God, and pray to him with the heart. It is a great and marvellous work he has to do in us, but not too great for him whoſe name is Wonderful, and who, with the ſame power that he cured all manner of diſeaſes, ſpoke the boiſterous waves into a calm, and raiſed the dead, can make every one of us ſay, with joy and wonder, "one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I ſee." Look for it at his hands. Let not your unbelief ſtand in the way of his mighty work. Lord Jeſus, work the wonders of thy grace here.

3. Let

3. Let us renounce our own wiſdom as perfect folly, and if we would be well taught, and ſafely directed in the way of ſalvation, take Chriſt for our *Counſellor*. Why does he come to thee, O man, with this name, but becauſe thy happineſs is dear to him, and becauſe he only knows what will bring thee to it? Thy own reaſon is very ſhort-ſighted, and for the moſt part at the command of thy perverſe will, and, when left to thyſelf, thou art ſure to miſtake thy road, and go on blindfold in the way of deſtruction. Thy Saviour knows this. He knows thy own thoughts, and thy own choice would ruin thee, and therefore kindly offers to take thee, a weak, ill-judging creature, by the hand, to guide thy ſoul into all truth, to change the vicious bent of thy affections, and fix thy will in ſubjection to his unerring commands.

O Jeſus! we are by nature "wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked," and at the ſame time ſo deluded by the pride of our evil hearts, as to ſay, "we are rich and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing." Do thou convince us of it, that, we knowing ourſelves in ſome meaſure as thou knoweſt us, may gladly take thy counſel, "to buy of thee gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich; and white raiment that we may be clothed, and that the ſhame of our nakedneſs do not appear; and to anoint our eyes with eye-ſalve, that we may ſee:" See good and evil, life and death, and have but one prayer for ourſelves, that thou wouldſt be to us,

4. "The Mighty God." The God of our help, the God of our hearts, through whom all our mercies are conveyed to us. If this is his name, nature, and eſſence, let us join with all the angels of God in worſhipping him, truſt in him, and fly to him as our ſanctuary. "Who is this," ſays Iſaiah, when he ſaw him in the viſion or prophecy, "that comes travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength?" The Lord anſwers him, "I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave." He was perfect in righteouſneſs *as man*, for man; and is "God mighty to ſave." This it is which gives ſuch a dignity and value to all his acts and ſufferings, and is a ſure foundation for our hope and confidence in him. Fear not, thou poor worm, trembling ſinner, when thy tranſgreſſions riſe up againſt thee, and ſtand as a mountain betwixt thee and thy God; thy faith may remove it. "Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved." Though thy ſins are more in number than the hairs of thy head, yet thy Redeemer is mighty. His promiſe ſtands engaged for thy deliverance; he wants no power to effect it; the blood that was ſhed for thee is the blood of God. O Jeſus! Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takeſt away the ſins of the world, make that blood the ſovereign antidote againſt all the diſtreſſes of our conſciences; let thy bowels be moved for us; take us into thyſelf; for thou art alſo

"The Everlaſting Father." We, who by nature, and as deſcended from Adam, are heirs of ſin and death, through grace become members of

a

a new family, of which Chriſt is the head and father, and conveys what he is, righteouſneſs and life, to all his children. Certainly this is a noble privilege, and a moſt bleſſed change in our condition; not leſs than for a beggar to be taken from the dunghill, and ſet on a throne, *Pſ.* cxiii. 7, 8. It ſhould be our care to preſerve this honourable and happy relation, and endeavour to act up to it; knowing to whom our choiceſt affections are due, ſtudying to be the true children of Chriſt in obedience, as well as by adoption and grace, and remembering always that holineſs becometh his houſe for ever. Even ſo, Lord Jeſus, grant we may reſolve to be thine, and may be heirs of thy glory.

Thus you ſee, my brethren, how Chriſt is made unto us what he is called, and is, "Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God, the Everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace." Each of theſe titles holds forth bleſſing, happineſs, and comfort to us; let us look well to our intereſt in them. All Chriſt's names are promiſes, and ſignify what he has to do in us; but if we do not put ourſelves into his hands for that purpoſe, we hear them in vain. What remains is, that you take the words of the text for your guide, "to examine yourſelves whether you be in the faith." Make the enquiry, as perſons that would not be deceived for the world, with reſpect to your ſalvation by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Put your hearts to anſwer the great intereſting queſtion, whether you know him in any meaſure, in his grace, pow-

er, and peace, according to the virtue of theſe names. And may he, who has all power given unto him in heaven and earth, aſſiſt and bleſs you in it. To him, with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghoſt, the bleſſed Trinity in Unity, be glory and praiſe for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

MATTHEW, Chap. v. ver. 10.

Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THE righteouſneſs of the goſpel conſidered as inherent in ourſelves is very different from what paſſes for ſuch in common eſteem. It is real inward holineſs; the renewal of our ſouls in the image of God; the knowledge and love of God by his own Spirit. It is the full and free ſurrender of ourſelves, our whole ſtate and being, to God in ſimplicity and ſincerity, that he may chooſe for us, and live in us, and be all in all to us. It is an upright will and an obedient conſcience; the ſacrifice of the heart, and the mind that was in Chriſt. It is turning to God from the evil that is in the world, and in our natures, with the whole ſtrength of our will and deſires; walking continually in his preſence, and giving up ourſelves without reſerve to his operations. It begins in humility, is rooted in faith, nouriſhed by prayer, perfected by love, and ends in acquaintance and communion with God here, and the everlaſting enjoyment of him hereafter.—And it is the higheſt wiſdom in man, and the ſole end of his creation, thus to "ſeek after God, if haply he might feel after him and find him;" to turn to him in faith and

and longing earneſt deſire; to reſign our will to him, and place our affections upon him, that he may flow in upon us with his goodneſs, and communicate his own happineſs to us.

It is the deſign of this diſcourſe to illuſtrate the nature of goſpel-righteouſneſs, or true holineſs—to contraſt it with that which commonly paſſes for ſuch in the world—to ſhew why the firſt is perſecuted and the laſt applauded; and then to conclude with a few inferences.

The Bible was written to ſhew us the abſolute indiſpenſable neceſſity of being renewed in the deep ground of our hearts; to teach us the one ſole method of being reſtored to the original dignity and perfection of our natures; to quicken our deſires and endeavours after it; to furniſh us with all proper helps for it; and eſpecially to caution us againſt truſting to any expedients or inventions of our own in this great affair, in oppoſition to the counſel and will of God for our ſalvation and recovery, ſo fully declared to us, and ſo plainly ſet before us. It acquaints us that the whole ſtate and condition of man, when he firſt came out of the hands of his maker, was very different from what it is now:—That he ſtood before God as an angel in paradiſe, holy and happy, with a capacity of receiving continually new degrees of life and bleſſing from him.—That by withdrawing his heart from him, and fooliſh imagination of being more perfect and happy independently

pendently of him, he fell, as God had told him he would, and as every creature neceſſarily muſt do that turns its will and deſires from God, into a ſtate of miſery, corruption, and death:—That, in this ſad condition of darkneſs and alienation from the life of God, he begat children in his own likeneſs, who are therefore the heirs of his ſin and weakneſs; born to trouble as the ſparks fly upwards; wearying themſelves in a vain purſuit after happineſs; and ſure never to ſee the hour when they are at reſt, and can ſay they have what they wiſh for, becauſe they have that fatal taint in their blood, that averſion to God, and love tot he creature which ist he death of their ſouls, and the eſſence of miſery.—That, notwithſtanding the dreadful fall of man into this unnatural helpleſs ſtate of ſin and condemnation, the God and Father of mercies did not forſake him, or leave him to periſh in it, but took occaſion from hence to diſplay the riches of his nature, and make all his goodneſs paſs before him, by propoſing to him a method of recovering all he had loſt, by giving him an aſſurance of pardon, and being received to grace and favour, as if he had never ſinned, through faith in a Redeemer. This ſeed of the woman was promiſed to bruiſe the ſerpent's head; to deſtroy and break in pieces the dominion which the devil, that crooked ſerpent, had gotten over the whole race of mankind, by the diſobedience and rebellion of their firſt parents: He was to be our Immanuel, God again with us and in us, to carry us ſafely through all the ſtages of our return to God; to purge out our inbred corruptions; to ſet

up

up the kingdom of heaven in our ſouls; to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs, and make us meet to be partakes of the inheritance of the ſaints in light. And "to as many as receive him" in faith, and love, and full conviction of their own weakneſs and wretched unworthineſs, "he gives power to become the ſons of God," entering as deeply into their nature as ſin had done, and raiſing up again in them the life and nature of heaven, healing them in his blood, comforting them with his preſence, and purifying them by his Spirit.

And as the Bible thus diſcovers to us the deep ground of our fall, and offers us redemption from it, and calls us to come out of it, ſo it informs us that if ever we are poſſeſſed of our primitive integrity, it muſt be the gift of God—To ſtand in the order and will of God—to be in ſubjection to the father of our ſpirits—to receive all his commands with the undiſputing ſimplicity of little children—to love him with all the heart—to delight in him, and long to enjoy him, and forſake all for him.—This is as much above the power as it is contrary to the nature of man in his preſent condition. And whoever thinks he can maſter his corruptions in his own ſtrength, and reſtore himſelf to a capacity of doing the will of God from the heart, I am confident either never tried, or elſe he takes a falſe meaſure of his ſtate and nature, and brings down his duty to ſo ſmall a matter, as any man may do, but God will never accept.—No.—When the awakened ſoul begins to aſk itſelf, "Can theſe dry bones live?" It anſwers

at

at once, "Lord God thou knoweſt."—It finds by its own experience, and repeated fruitleſs endeavours after holineſs, that our regeneration is the work of an Almighty power, and that we can no more reſtore the image of God to ourſelves, now we have loſt it, than we could have made ourſelves in it at the firſt; and, therefore, it caſts itſelf wholly upon God, condemned and helpleſs, praying inceſſantly for deliverance, and doing all it does in religion to prepare itſelf for the divine operations. And this, indeed, is a hopeful time, and a happy entrance upon the goſpel-ſtate, and "bleſſed are they who thus hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled" with the very thing they hunger and thirſt after—with righteouſneſs they ſhall go on from ſtrength to ſtrength, and from one degree of goodneſs to another, rejoicing in their progreſs, as the ſureſt mark of their adoption and acceptance to a ſhare of that perfect righteouſneſs which is treaſured up for believers in Chriſt, and imparted to all thoſe who, by faith, become living members of his body.

But this humility—this ſelf-contempt—this patient waiting for the kingdom of God—this loving faithful obedient Spirit—this devotion of the whole man to God—this aſpiring after inward holineſs by the power of the Holy Ghoſt—does it meet with fair treatment and a favourable reception in the world? Is it common for men to bid God ſpeed to them who are looking out for a change of their ſtate, and reſolved to enter upon a chriſtian courſe? To aſſiſt them in their reſolu-

tions, and pray for grace to imitate them? This would be ſuppoſing human nature to be what it is not—inclined to real goodneſs, and well pleaſed to ſee it proſper in the world. And accordingly here is a warning given us, which is more fully expreſſed in other parts of ſacred ſcripture—That all ſuch as ſhould endeavour to become more amiable in themſelves, and more acceptable to God, by approaching to his nature as near as they could, would be liable at all times to be hated and perſecuted by men: Not only by the inconſiderate profligate part of the ſpecies, who are ready for any miſchief, and from whom no better is to be expected, but by men pretending to religion and the fear of God, and challenging to themſelves as high a place in his favour as any, and, therefore, diſdaining to be thought defective, and ſhewing their ill-will to thoſe who would convince them of it by contempt, calumny, and all manner of ill uſage.

Let us, therefore, now ſee what religion is in the hands of theſe men. It is the religion of doing no harm. It is, moreover, the religion of doing acts of kindneſs, generoſity, and charity, in proportion to our abilities, and attending regularly upon divine ordinances. And whoever keeps clear of ſcandalous open ſinning, and at the ſame time maintains a fair character in the world, and preſerves a decency in the worſhip of God, and more eſpecially if he ſhews a zeal for it, paſſes in common eſteem for a righteous man. And to offer to unſettle ſuch a one—to put him upon conſidering the

temper

temper of his heart, and examining the ground he ſtands on—to hint that poſſibly all may not be well within—that nothing is more common than ſelf-deceit—that the religion of the Bible is different from what it is taken for—and that more goes to the being a chriſtian than is generally imagined: I ſay, to call ſuch as theſe who are not groſsly faulty, and have, moreover, the appearance of many good qualities to ſelf-examination, would be thought moroſe and uncharitable. Perhaps there are not many who ever thought of or deſired any other kind of righteouſneſs,—and to talk of any other as neceſſary to ſalvation, is cenſured as running into needleſs extremes—as being righteous over much—is branded with the hateful names of fanaticiſm and enthuſiaſm: But nevertheleſs it lies upon my conſcience, and I ſhould be falſe to my office among you, if I did not endeavour to bring you to the knowledge of the truth, and to warn you againſt a miſtake, which, according to the letter of ſcripture, I think to be dangerous. And the more ſo as it has the general opinion of the world, natural corruption, and the pride of our hearts on its ſide.

Now, in the firſt place, do not think I ſtand here to vilify civility of manners or a fair carriage in the world, and eſpecially any kind or degree of uſefulneſs.—It is the buſineſs of all religion to inculcate, improve, and enforce all the virtues that are neceſſary to the well-being of ſociety. And the more of religion always the more of theſe. And for any man who is wanting in them to pre-

rend to religion is an affront to common ſenſe, and the height of impudence. And it is, moreover, the peculiar glory and great excellence of the chriſtian religion, that it recommends "whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, lovely and of good report," to the eſteem and love of mankind, and contains the beſt method of bringing us to the practice of them.—But, on the other hand, it is urged that religion goes farther than the regulation of the outward man; that there may be a fair ſhew of outward decency, regularity, and ſobriety; a peaceable innocent behaviour; a general regard to juſtice and the law of kindneſs in our dealings with others; and a ſtrict obſervation of the outward offices of religion, without any true religion in the heart. Thus far we may go for the ſake of eaſe, convenience, and reputation; and thus far the heathens could go by the bare light of nature. I wiſh I could not ſay that many of them exceeded the generality of thoſe who call themſelves chriſtians, in their lives and converſation.—And certain it is, that if the other world was out of the queſtion, and there was no God to bring us to judgment for our actions, it would be ten thouſand times better on all accounts, to be true and juſt in our dealings, orderly, quiet, and inoffenſive in our whole behaviour than the contrary. But, dear brethren, this is not going to the root of the matter. This is not the religion of the Bible. As yet we are upon the falſe bottom of our natures. We pretend to build our hopes of ſalvation upon the ſcripture, and yet this is fleſh and not ſpirit, and they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.

One

One would think that the ſacred ſcriptures had ſaid enough to decide this point;—to bring men to a knowledge of themſelves—to convince them of the vanity and inſufficiency of all merely human righteouſneſs,—and to prevail with them to look out for ſomething better; for are we not there told, that when men are called upon to partake of the bleſſings of the goſpel, one may go to his farm and another to his merchandiſe, and beg to be excuſed;—that they may not be unjuſt, extortioners, and adulterers;—that they may faſt twice in the week, and be ſo very honeſt as to pay tithes of all they poſſeſs,—and yet not be juſtified, i. e. in the favour of God; that they may juſtify themſelves before men, (which they cannot do without a fair ſhew of ſomething that looks like goodneſs) and yet be abominable in the ſight of God: And certainly they are ſo whatever they may think of themſelves, or how highly ſoever they may be eſteemed by others, if they ſettle with the weight of their ſouls and the ſtrength of their affections upon the world;—if they are ignorant of that body of death they carry about with them;—the pride, malice, and envy of their hearts;—the perpetual ſtrong oppoſition of their wills and deſires to the will and law of God, and their inward total alienation from the life of God; if they never found ſo much of their ſin as to be pained and humbled under a ſenſe of it;—if they never felt the burden of it, ſo as to cry earneſtly to God for deliverance from it, and ſtrength againſt it;—if they do not give up all their own works as worthleſs in the ſight of God;—if the

deep

deep ground of their hearts is untouched, and they do not know their inward want of a Saviour, to atone for their guilt, to dwell in them by his Spirit, and to make even their beſt works and ſervices acceptable to God: In a word, if they are not endeavouring, wiſhing, and praying with all their ſouls to be rooted and grounded in the religion of love—the love of God and man, as the perfection of their natures, the great end of their creation and ſole capacity for happineſs, the goſpel has no promiſes or comforts for them; nay, it lies full againſt them. Whatever they are, they are of and from themſelves, and muſt be left to ſtand or fall by it for ever: Nay, the Bible is ſo deciſive upon theſe points, and it is ſo plainly the whole deſign of it to bring us to the knowledge and belief of them, that if we miſtake, it is becauſe we ſhut our eyes againſt the light, and do not chooſe to underſtand too much of what we ſeem reſolved not to practiſe.

When the word of God comes with power, declaring the neceſſity of repentance for *all* in their natural ſtate, and of an hearty deep ſenſe of the unworthineſs and inſufficiency of our perſons and of all our performances; when we ſee the need of coming to Chriſt for remiſſion, and living by the faith of the Son of God, and not daring to lift up our heads without an intereſt in the great atonement; when we hear of putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man, which, after God, (after the likeneſs, according to the will, and by the power of God) is created

in

in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, ſo that we can truly ſay, Behold all things are become new, and our converſation is in heaven: This comes home to the heart and conſcience: This is laying the ax to the root of the tree indeed: This is piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and the joints and marrow. And, therefore, though this repentance and faith, and living by the Spirit of God, is all in all in religion; tho' it is the very thing we want, and God would gladly give us, and can give us nothing elſe to make us happy, yet it will go hard but we will put ſomething elſe in the room of it, and boldly venture all upon it: For, as I ſaid before, a decent worldly life; a behaviour that will entitle us to much eſteem and reſpect from men; generoſity, kindneſs, relieving the poor; a ſtrict performance of the outward duties of religion, and often extraordinary zeal for it, is the image of our own ſetting up, which we fall down and worſhip. Be not ſurprized at my ſaying this, for St. Paul ſays more; if we give all our goods to feed the poor and have not charity, a ſincere love of God and man, it will profit us nothing; but the ſpiritual deep-ſearching religion of Jeſus; this mourning and poverty of ſpirit; this real mean opinion of ourſelves, in order to believing and becoming new creatures; this heart-work in religion we will not come too near it. Surely we may do well, and ſtand fair with God without it; we will be guilty of no ſuch ſingularity in religion; we are reſolved at any rate to preſerve the good opinion of the world.

Where

Where then ſhall we find a place to ſet our foot on? Which is the truth, and how ſhall we know when we are ſafe? Now, if we have read the holy ſcriptures to no better purpoſe than to hazard our ſouls upon any kind of outward behaviour, whether in religion or our dealings in the world, it has hitherto been a dead letter to us indeed; and I am ſure if we have not found our ſin in it, we have found nothing elſe there. But waving this at preſent, I think we have an eaſy infallible rule here in the text to know which of theſe two kinds of righteouſneſs is the true; and my deſign, in pitching upon theſe words, was to bring it out to obſervation, as it is a matter in which it greatly concerns us not to be deceived. And I have now brought what I had to ſay upon it as it were to a point. "Bleſſed are they, ſays Chriſt, which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake." Then I ſay by righteouſneſs here, he does not mean what paſſes for ſuch in the world; for it never was, nor ever will be perſecuted, and that becauſe it *is* the righteouſneſs of the world. It has the countenance and favour of the world. The world is altogether on its ſide; ſmiles upon it, and pays homage to it; beſtows ſaintſhip upon it here and heaven hereafter: And, therefore, unleſs our Bleſſed Saviour here ſuppoſes a caſe which could never happen to the world's end, that the righteouſneſs of man, of man's own chooſing, ſetting up, priding himſelf in, and truſting to, could be perſecuted by man, this is not the righteouſneſs he is here ſpeaking of: No, it is the amiable loving religion of the goſpel which ſtrikes at the heart, and comes like fire into the

the ſoul, burning and conſuming its ſecret iniquities, that would purge all the venom of the old ſerpent out of our natures, and lay the foundation of all bleſſedneſs in us by faith in the blood ſhed for us, and given unto us as the principle of a new heavenly life. It is this, I ſay, which is dreaded, hated, and perſecuted—by lies, by calumnies, by hard ſpeeches, and much harder treatment, when the powers of all the world are againſt it. I do not ſay that it is *always* neceſſarily perſecuted in all times, places, and perſons, or that perſecution is a certain mark of truth; but that man's righteouſneſs *never* is, therefore cannot be the true.

I leave this matter to your ſerious conſideration, and ſhall only add two or three ſhort exhortations.

1. For God's ſake look well at the Bible. And ſee whether it does not condemn our whole ſtate, and call upon us to turn from it with abhorrence, and look out for real inward converſion, and reſtoration from the fall to a life in God. In this view it is the book of all books, conſiſtent and uniform—a ſtorehouſe of the moſt precious intereſting knowledge, and comes upon us with a flood of light. In any other, the great deſign of it will be loſt upon us. It will leave us in the darkneſs and deadneſs of our natures. We ſhall but trifle with it, and with our ſouls, till it brings us to ſee our death in treſpaſſes and ſins, and cloſe heartily with God's method of being recovered from it. The whole amount of our religion will be

only that of the young man in the goſpel, and we ſhall be apt to ſay in the pride of our hearts, for having kept the commandments as we think, "what lack I yet?" While God knows we want every thing.—And if we have no experience of a working time with God in the depth of our hearts, we are ſtill poor, and blind, and naked, and miſerable.

2. Beware of a perſecuting ſpirit. "Take heed, ſays Chriſt, that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones;" thoſe who are little in their own eyes, and enter into a ſpirit of mourning, and come to Chriſt to find reſt for their ſouls from the troubles of an awakened conſcience, and the power of inbred corruption. What ground is there, I beſeech you, in all this, for contempt, hatred, and perſecution? And what ſort of readers of the Bible are they, who can look upon ſuch with an evil eye, when the moſt High God ſays, "to this man will I look" (with approbation and delight) "even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, and that trembleth at my word."—And how truly may it be ſaid in this caſe, that God ſeeth not as man ſeeth? Let this word then, which ſo fully ſets before us the dreadful guilt of a perſecuting temper, make the ſtouteſt tremble; I mean, "whoſoever ſhall offend one of theſe little ones that believe in me," ſhall diſcourage them, or lay ſtumbling blocks in their way, ſhall do or ſay any thing to hinder them in their chriſtian progreſs,—"it were better for him that a milſtone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the ſea."

Examine

Examine yourſelves whether ye be in the faith. If you have come to it by repentance, and there is no other door of entrance into the goſpel ſtate, you cannot much find fault with any one who is coming at it in the ſame humbling way. If he is miſtaken you will inſtruct him in meekneſs, "for the ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive but be gentle toward all men." Knowing that every man muſt approve himſelf unto God according to his own conſcience, and not according to that of another; that in matters of religion or opinion, ill uſage is the moſt unlikely method to recover men from their errors; that it has power only upon the tongue, and may force men to ſay what they do not think, but can never reach their wills or conſciences.

But you will ſay this preaching and inſiſting ſo much upon inward converſion, and the experience of a new life by the power of faith, is condemning all others. *So it is*, if they are not converted, elſe why is it preached? And ſo do the ſacred ſcriptures condemn them. Repent or periſh. And for any to be provoked at it, and run into a ſpirit of bitterneſs againſt it, is a ſtrong ſign that they neither are converted, nor at preſent care to think of it. They may put in a loud claim to true religion, but, like the falſe mother, they had rather take up with a dead half of it, than ſee it all given alive to the right owner.

3. Let thoſe who ſuffer according to the will of God, commit their ſouls unto him in well-doing,

as unto a faithful creator. " Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." " Bleſſed are they that are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake," i. e. who, when they are perſecuted for the ſake of Chriſt and his goſpel, patiently endure it, and love and bleſs their perſecutors, taking the croſs, whatever it is, as their due, and a means of their purification, and praying after the example of Chriſt, for the converſion of thoſe who are the inſtruments in God's hands of bringing it upon them: For, otherwiſe, " if we give our bodies to be burned, and have not this charity, it will profit us nothing. Bleſſed are they for their's is the kingdom of heaven." They are tranſlated into the kingdom and family of God here, waſhed by the blood of his Son, and brought under the power of his ſpirit, and joint heirs with Chriſt of that kingdom, of everlaſting bleſſedneſs in heaven, which God hath prepared for them that love him. There they ſhall join in the univerſal ſong of the triumphant church, " Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. For thou waſt ſlain and has redeemed us by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people."

Laſtly, Though the righteouſneſs I have been chiefly ſpeaking of in this diſcourſe, viz. inward holineſs and purity of heart, is ſo neceſſary a part of our chriſtianity, that without it no man ſhall ſee the Lord; yet we muſt not ſo think of it, or truſt in it, as if it was the ground of our final acceptance

ance with God. When we have done all we can, and God has done all in us and for us that he ever will do, we are ſtill unprofitable ſervants, and can be accepted only in the beloved: For "the wages of ſin is death—but the gift of God is eternal life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." Firſt and laſt our whole ſalvation is of him, our pardon, our holineſs, our acceptance. Let it for ever humble us to think we are ſuch unworthy weak creatures, and have ſo much imperfection ſtill cleaving to our beſt performances, even in the higheſt ſtate of grace we ſhall ever arrive at, that we muſt at no rate abide by the merit of them, or venture our ſalvation upon them, but receive all from God as a gift, and be ſaved by the righteouſneſs of another.—And above all let the infinite love of God giving his Son to die for us, and to be our righteouſneſs, win over all the powers of our ſouls to his ſervice, that we may be holy as he is holy, and perfect as he is perfect.—Let us not ſin becauſe grace hath ſo abounded. God forbid we ſhould ever make that a handle for licentiouſneſs or carnal ſecurity, which, in its own nature, is of all others the ſweeteſt allurement, the ſtrongeſt tie upon our ſouls, to devote ourſelves to God in every kind and every degree of holineſs. But let us watch evermore and pray without ceaſing, that we may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt," and endeavour all we can to recommend our faith to the eſteem of others by the bleſſed fruits of it, that when they ſee our good works, our reſignation, our meekneſs, our love, they may glorify

our

our Father which is in heaven by their own conversion.—And to him be glory in the church by Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON V.

GAL. iii. 10.

Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

I Am frequently endeavouring to ſet before you the evil of ſin, and the Divine indignation againſt it; and tho' much has been already ſaid to you on this humbling ſubject, I would urge it ſtill farther; for it is a matter in which we are very hard of belief, though all is connected with it, our return to God and acceptance of Chriſt, our final ſalvation or eternal miſery: It is the ground-work of ſcripture, and if it does not lay this foundation in us, let us ſay what we will we do not believe it. We are naturally in the depth of ſin, ſold under ſin, love it and live in it, and if we are not thoroughly perſuaded of its deadly nature, and the juſtice of God in the puniſhment of it, we ſhall never be prepared for his mercy. If we think we need not fear, let us live as we pleaſe, or that the threatenings of ſcripture are nothing but an empty ſound, its call to repentance will, of courſe, be ſlighted, and we ſhall never once think of putting ourſelves in the way of forgiveneſs.

My deſign at preſent is to ſet before you that part of the ſervice for Aſh-Wedneſday, in which we are reminded of the curſes in ſcripture againſt impenitent

impenitent ſinners, and to make ſome obſervations upon them for your farther conviction and inſtruction in this great and weighty point: And I do it the rather, becauſe you will not come to hear them when they are appointed to be read. Who knows but they may reach you now? Who can tell whether God may not have a bleſſing for you in his curſes? I am ſure they are intended in mercy for this very end; and if they ſhould make your ears tingle, and your hearts tremble this day, you will have cauſe to bleſs God for them all your lives. I beſeech you attend to them, and I pray God give you the right underſtanding of them.

Curſed is the man that maketh any carved or molten image to worſhip it, *Deut.* xxvii. 15.——Curſed is he that curſeth his father and mother, *ver.* 16.——Curſed is he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark, *ver.* 17.——Curſed is he that maketh the blind to go out of his way, *ver.* 18.—Curſed is he that perverteth the judgment of the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and widow, *ver.* 19.——Curſed is he that ſmiteth his neighbour ſecretly, *ver.* 24.—Curſed is he that lieth with his neighbour's wife, *Lev.* xx. 10.——Curſed is he that taketh reward to ſlay the innocent, *Deut.* xxvii. 25.——Curſed is he that putteth his truſt in man, and taketh man for his defence, and in his heart goeth from the Lord, *Jer.* xvii. 5.——Curſed are the unmerciful, fornicators and adulterers, covetous perſons, idolaters, ſlanderers, drunkards, and extortioners, *Matt.* xxv. 41.—1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10.

1. Let

1. Let me obſerve to you, that if there are any other ſins beſides thoſe here ſet down, as doubtleſs there are, they muſt likewiſe be taken into the account, and all have the ſame ſentence paſſed upon them. The ſins here particularly mentioned are chiefly ſins againſt the ſecond table, or ſins againſt our neighbour, and not all thoſe neither. Here is little ſaid of ſins againſt the firſt table, or ſins againſt God; which, though they are not ſo ſcandalous in the eyes of the world, and but lightly regarded by ourſelves, are as heinous in the ſight of God as any other. Here is nothing ſaid of ſins of omiſſion; which we have reaſon to dread and condemn ourſelves for as much as any, both becauſe we muſt give as ſtrict an account of them, and becauſe we have more of them, and ſooner forget them, ſo that they cannot eaſily be called back by a particular repentance. The duties you omitted, perhaps but the very laſt Sabbath, are by this time quite ſlipt out of your minds, never to be thought of again, though God keeps a book of remembrance of them. If you were not at church morning and afternoon, he knows it. He knows whether you then ſate down to read the ſcriptures, whether day by day you think of your ſouls, pray in ſecret, and with your families, and train up your children and ſervants in the way they ſhould go. He knows what works of mercy and charity, and many other things, you might have done, and did not. All theſe, I ſay, ſins againſt God, and ſins of omiſſion, muſt be added to the catalogue of thoſe which have now been repeated to you; for you will be fatally deceived if you

judge yourſelves by a ſhort rule, or leave any thing that is in God's table of ſins out of your own account.

2. Obſerve and underſtand, that the meaning of the curſe you have heard is not that it belongs only to thoſe who are guilty of all, or many of the ſins here mentioned, but of any one of them. It would be ſtrange, indeed, if any man ſhould be guilty of them all, and at this rate there would hardly be a ſinner in the world. But take care how you think and judge in this matter; for St. James tells us, that "whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," *James* ii. 10. and that becauſe it is the law of God, whoſe authority binds the whole and every part of it upon us, and extends alike to every command; for otherwiſe, the law would ceaſe to be a rule, and no command of God be in force, as ſuch, where a power is aſſumed of diſputing or diſpenſing with any. From this miſtake wickedneſs abounds in the world; one man pleading an exemption from one command, and another from another, and every man indulging himſelf in his beloved vice, to the ſubverſion of all order, and excluſion of the divine government. You are not a *murderer*, nor an *adulterer*, nor a *thief*; then you will not be condemned as ſuch. But if you are *unmerciful*, or a *ſlanderer*, or a *drunkard*, or a *ſabbath-breaker*, or a *profane ſwearer*, or a *covetous worldling*, or *truſt in any thing you have more than God*, or live *in oppoſition to his law* in any one reſpect, what can you have to ſay

why

why judgment ſhould not paſs upon you according to that law, and how will you ever be able to clear yourſelves of the curſe which belongs to the particular ſins you are guilty of? I would not be underſtood to ſpeak of the principle of ſin in believers, or any tranſgreſſions they may happen to fall into, and repent of; which they do as ſure as they are believers, humbling themſelves before God for ſins of conſtitution, ſurprize, or infirmity, which others would think and call *venial*, and living with allowance *in none*. But here lies the danger, and what I am obſerving and inſiſting upon is, that one ſin indulged, pleaded for, and therefore unrepented of, is inconſiſtent with a chriſtian ſtate, and will ſhut the door of mercy againſt you as well as more. To which I add, that in all our ſearchings for ſin, we ſhall take a falſe meaſure of it, and totally miſtake the truth of our condition, if we do not look at the heart, where God looks, and paſs judgment there, as Chriſt has directed us to do. *Matt.* v.

3. Let us aſk ourſelves the queſtion, whoſe curſes do we hear? The curſe of him *who can*, and, in caſe of ſtubborn diſobedience, will "deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell." They are the poſitive declarations of the juſt and holy God againſt ſin and ſinners, and they are delivered in the form of curſes to expreſs the certainty of them, and ſtrike the greater terror into us. For you are not to ſuppoſe that God's curſing is like man's, or that there is any thing of the weakneſs of paſſion in it; but he curſes that we may conſider

what we have to do, and how we venture upon ſin, when he has declared his diſpleaſure againſt it, and his will to puniſh it, in ſo ſolemn and awful a manner.—When he ſwears by himſelf, "as I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth," we can take comfort from thence, if we repent and turn to him, and think ourſelves more ſafe becauſe of his oath: So when he pronounces the doom of ſin in the form of a curſe, we ſhould dread it the more on that account, and take warning from the ſeverity of his threatenings to eſcape them. Aſſure yourſelves, God does not curſe in the manner you think of when you hear that word; but he thereby publiſhes to the world the accurſed nature of ſin, his eternal abhorrence of it, and determination to puniſh it. Neither do you make the curſes of ſcripture your own in the bad ſenſe of the word, by hearing them repeated, and ſaying *Amen* to them, and much leſs are you required to do it in a curſing diſpoſition; but what you do is declaring your belief of them on the teſtimony of God's word, and if you do not believe them, you muſt not pretend to believe the Bible. And know for certain that they are the words of God who cannot lie, whether you believe them or not, and always in force againſt all obſtinate and impenitent ſinners; and I cannot think that you take the way to avoid them by keeping yourſelves out of the way of hearing of them. Let them ſtrike deep into your ſouls now; and think with yourſelves what you can do againſt God, or what power you have to ſtop the courſe of Almighty juſtice. Stop

the

the courſe of the ſun, keep off ſickneſs from your bodies: He has decreed that you ſhall die; ſay to him, you will not; do ſomething or other to ſhew that you can controul him, before you bid defiance to him, and provoke his diſpleaſure. You know you cannot; and however you may fight againſt him with your ſins, you cannot poſſibly entertain a thought of reſiſting him by open force. Then ſtand in awe of his threatenings, fear his curſes, and think only of this one thing, how to ſecure yourſelves againſt them.

Nay, there is ſomething in this matter ſtill more dreadful and alarming than any thing I have yet ſaid, namely, that whenever you commit any one ſin, the curſe of it belongs to you; from that moment the decree is gone out againſt you, that very ſin muſt be puniſhed; you have pulled that ſentence upon your heads, "the ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die," and muſt lie under it for ever, for any thing you can do to help yourſelves. I do not ſay there is no hope in the caſe, or that you are loſt for ever without remedy; but help muſt come to you by another hand, and it muſt alſo come in a way of ſatisfaction to juſtice, which you have not in your power. There is a debt to pay, and you are caſt into priſon for it, and can by no means come out thence till the laſt farthing of it is paid. How this is done every chriſtian knows, and I will not forget to tell you before I conclude. In the mean-time let this obſervation have its due weight with you, that the curſes you have heard out of ſcripture are God's, and that he will ſay *Amen* to them whether man does or not.

4. Let

4. Let it be obſerved that the curſes of God againſt impenitent ſinners will be executed upon them chiefly in another world, and that the whole weight and power of his wrath cannot be known till after death. We may feel the effects of his diſpleaſure, and doubtleſs do, in pain and ſickneſs, croſſes and calamities of various kinds. And whenever his hand is heavy upon us in any kind of trouble, we ſhould learn from ſcripture to know the author, and conſider the deſign of it. Then is the time, if ever, to make deep ſearch into ourſelves, and aſk, why God does this? And as ſure as we aſk the queſtion ſincerely, we ſhall find the anſwer to it in our ſin. For God afflicts for nothing elſe but to bring it to our remembrance, to chaſtiſe, humble, and correct us, and turn us out of the road of deſtruction; and we ſuffer like beaſts, and not like reaſonable creatures, or chriſtians who have the hiſtory of providence before us in the Bible, if we do not conſider what is laid upon us as the deſert and puniſhment of our ſin, and the means of preventing much greater ſufferings to come.

It is true, when troubles come thick upon us, we have not a prophet, or a meſſenger ſent from heaven, on purpoſe to tell us what we have done, or what God is doing with us; we need it not; the ſcripture tells us once for all, and we ſhould tell it faithfully to ourſelves, *it is for ſin*; and one great deſign of ſcripture is to teach us that God is always the ſame, and will deal with mankind at all times according to the methods of his providence

dence therein recorded, as the unalterable purpoſe of his will, and a perpetual warning to us of the great evil and neceſſary conſequence of ſin, viz. eternal death. For that is the curſe of all God's curſes, the true import and full meaning of them all; and I am now particularly obſerving to you, that nothing we ſuffer in this life can diſcharge us from it, if we die in our ſins.

The 90th Pſalm is intitled *a Prayer of Moſes*, and ſuppoſed to have been delivered by him at that melancholy time when all the Iſraelites, who came out of Egypt, of twenty years old and upward, except Joſhua and Caleb, died in the Wilderneſs, above forty in a day for forty years together. Many of them might repent and ſave their ſouls; but if they did not, the death of their bodies was not the whole of their puniſhment, any more than the fire which fell upon the men of Sodom was the laſt they were to feel. When the traitor Judas reflected on his guilt in ſelling his Maſter, he had ſuch a hell in his boſom, that he could find no relief but in putting an end to his life: But, nevertheleſs, it is ſaid, "He went to his own place." Oh! that dreadful place! Oh! that heavy word, "His own place!" For it is every impenitent ſinner's *own*, as it were by right of purchaſe, but certainly by the juſt judgment of God, and he muſt go to it as naturally and neceſſarily as the flame mounts upward, or a ſtone falls to the ground. There, I ſay, is the curſe of ſin, and what you ſhould ever keep in mind and lay to heart. We feel the plague of it in part in the troubles

troubles and ſorrows of this world, in one loſs after another of what is moſt dear to us, in the pains, ſickneſſes, and death of the body; but "the ſecond death, in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone," the everlaſting death of the ſoul, that is the power of God's wrath. Think what a ſad thing it is to have our portion of it both in this life and the next, to feel it in ſome meaſure now, and lie under the weight of it for ever.

Now, ſeeing that ſin is ſo abominable in the ſight of God, the object of his heavy diſpleaſure, and we have ſuch warning from him of the deſtruction it will bring upon us, why do we fear it ſo little; why is it as nothing in our eyes; why do we generally live and die in it? It muſt be for one of theſe reaſons, either you do not ſee your ſin, or if you cannot wholly deny it, as it is impoſſible you ſhould in great and plain caſes, you deny or extenuate the guilt of it, and fly to the mercy of God in oppoſition to his juſtice: But whatever your blindneſs is owing to, whether it is ignorance of your ſin, or diſbelief of the word of God, great is your danger, and as yet you are in no condition to make uſe of the one ſole remedy of God's providing for ſinners. I now tell you that Chriſt is that remedy; and I pray God prepare you for it by ſelf-knowledge, and the belief of ſcripture.

Let us look back a little, and conſider what has been ſaid: Sins, both of omiſſion and commiſſion,

miſſion, we have innumerable; and the ſentence upon all and every one of them, according to the law of God, is death. His curſes are the declarations of his will to execute judgment upon us for the tranſgreſſion of his law, and "he is not a man that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man that he ſhould repent," nor does he want power to effect his purpoſes. And again, his threatenings, tho' they take place oftener in this world than we imagine, yet relate chiefly to the eternal puniſhments of another. Alas! What ſhall we do in this extremity? What method can we find out of ourſelves to eſcape his wrath, or where ſhall we go with our guilty ſouls? Go where you will with them, and do what you will for them, it is all in vain till you know that you are loſt and undone in yourſelves, and turn your eyes to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſin of the world," yours and mine, and the ſin of every man that ſhall be ſaved; *that Lamb of God*, and *nothing elſe*. If your "head was waters," according to the Prophet's wiſh, *Jer.* ix. i. and your "eyes a fountain of tears," to weep day and night, they would not waſh away the guilt of one ſingle ſin. If it is but one, *death* it muſt have; and the blood which is to pay the price, and redeem you from the curſe of it, muſt be the blood of the Son of God.

You would, perhaps, ſtand amazed to hear of God's curſes againſt ſin; feel a ſtrange uneaſineſs within yourſelves while I was ſpeaking of them, and would rather that I ſhould preach ſmooth things to you than bring them to your remem-

brance. Indeed, my brethren, I think I do preach ſmooth things, and bring glad tidings of great joy to your ears; juſt as comfortable as it would be to a condemned criminal to have a pardon brought him when the halter was about his neck. It is my delight, as well as my office among you, to tell you of the precious things of Chriſt; of deliverance from wrath by him; of redemption from every curſe; of the full and free pardon of all your ſins, only by his blood-ſhedding; and it is my great deſire, before I die, to ſee you crying after him, as the blind, the lame, the lepers did when he was upon earth, every one of you for your own healing: But how can this be while you think yourſelves whole, fear no evil, and do not know your want of ſuch a Phyſician? How can you ever come to him for a pardon, if you do not ſee the condemnation you are under, and find the ſentence of death in yourſelves? You muſt, you muſt come to this; this is your awakening, the Spirit's firſt work in you, and the way to Chriſt, the Saviour of ſinners. I muſt therefore be faithful to you here, upon the peril of my own ſoul. I muſt tell you of ſin, what a depth of evil there is in it far beyond what you could ever have thought of, and what a depth of ſin there is in *you*: And when you know and feel it by grace given you from above, ſee your danger, and the curſe which cleaves to it, Oh! how will you rejoice to hear thoſe words, "Thou ſhalt not die;" to have your pardon confirmed beyond all doubt by a thouſand promiſes of ſcripture, and mercy as it were forcing itſelf upon your hearts; to ſee

Chriſt

Chriſt paying the vaſt debt you owed, and bearing the heavy load of your ſins in his own body; and to know aſſuredly that the forgiveneſs of all ſins is ſealed in his blood to every believer for ever.

And when you have faith in the pardoning love of God, and come to it in the way of repentance, ſee the deſert of ſin, and the greatneſs of your own, the great mercy of your deliverance, and how dearly it was purchaſed for you, what will you do then? Will you keep your ſin? Will you continue to rebel againſt ſuch goodneſs? Will not the love which has done ſuch great things for you kindle one ſpark of love to the author of it in your own breaſts? It cannot be: You would think it great baſeneſs to be ungrateful to the perſon who had ſaved your life, and ſcorn any man who ſhould charge you with it. And if Chriſt who, by the will of God, became a curſe for you, to deliver you from the curſe of the law, and to ſave you from the everlaſting deſtruction of ſoul and body, has no tie upon you, no love, no gratitude, no obedience from you, it is evident at once that you ſet no value upon what he has done, if you can be ſuppoſed to believe it at all, and, whatever you pretend, have no experience of a work of grace. He is your ranſom, your peace, your life; and if you are his, the curſes of God can no more fall upon you than they can now upon him: But a bleeding, dying ſoul, and a proud, ſtubborn heart are ill matched; and if you will not come to him in humility, as loſt and ruined

in yourſelves for pardon and deliverance, and with deſire to have the ſtrength of ſin ſubdued in you, he will not be mocked; he knows what is in your hearts, and that you come to him with a lie in your mouths when you call him your Saviour. Therefore know your condition;—believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that ye may be ſaved;—make proof of your faith and knowledge.

Know your condition. Know that you are fallen creatures, ſinners againſt God, condemned and helpleſs, and that if you have not been ſtirred up to ſeek mercy from the Lord, ſin with its curſe lieth at your door. I do not pretend to ſay what meaſure of trouble for ſin is neceſſary. It may be more or leſs, as God pleaſes; and he knows beſt how to ſuit himſelf to every one's caſe. A little of it may be as effectual in ſome, to bring them to the acknowledgment of the truth, and a change of their ſtate, as a great deal of it in others; but ſuch a ſenſe of the danger and miſery of ſin, and of the greatneſs of their own, there muſt be in all, as is ſufficient to bring them in repentance before God, and make deliverance from it welcome.

And when you are thus prepared for your remedy, fear not to take it. Take it without delay, the very moment you know you want it, and do not ſtand poring upon your ſins, to keep you from it. There is but one way of dealing with them, one cure for them, one method of giving eaſe to the conſcience, and that is not any thing you can do.

The

The word of your peace is, "believe in Chriſt." Believe that he only could take away the guilt and curſe of your ſin, and that he has done it; for one of theſe without the other will give no relief to your ſouls. It can ſignify nothing to you that Chriſt is the Saviour of ſinners, or that all the world is ſaved by him, if you do not truſt in the grace and merit of his death for yourſelves, worſhip God, and do all your works in the faith and comfort of it.

There is a pretty figure, or ſpeaking picture of the deliverance he has wrought for us in a paſſage of *Leviticus*, chap. xiv.—When any man's plague of leproſy was healed, and he was to be cleanſed by the prieſt, two live birds were to be brought; one of which was to be killed, and the living bird dipt in the blood of it, and then let fly, to ſignify the eſcape of a ſinner from a worſe plague than that of leproſy. And many other ceremonies the Jews had by divine appointment, to foreſhew and be figures of atonement by the blood of Chriſt. But we have great reaſon to be thankful that we live at a time when Chriſt, the ſubſtance of them all, is come, and the Spirit given to teſtify of him, and work faith in us; for they were but dark preaching in compariſon of the light of the New Teſtament. Receive it, and rejoice in it; and when you are convinced of ſin, and looking out for help, never be ſo much your own enemy as to doubt of God's will to receive you to an intereſt in Chriſt, till you can ſhew the place of ſcripture where you are excluded by name.

I ſay, do not thus wrong your own ſouls; but when you are ſo far truly awakened as to ſay, "what ſhall I do to be ſaved?" take the anſwer of ſcripture into your hearts, "believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved." *Acts* xvi. 31. Think greatly of the power of Chriſt, the riches of his grace, and will to ſave you; think how urgent your caſe is, what a curſe is lying upon you if Chriſt does not take it off, what mercy is offered you, how you are invited and commanded to accept of it, and that your not accepting it in faith and thankfulneſs to God, is one of the greateſt ſins you can be guilty of; and this, with the bleſſing of God upon your prayers, will put an end to all your unbelieving fears. Sin is frightful when it riſes up before the conſcience in all its guilt and odiouſneſs; and too many are apt to plead for months and years againſt their relief, as if their ſin was too great to be forgiven; but that one ſaying is a full anſwer to all their doubts, "if God be for us, who can be againſt us?" The Lord eſtabliſh you in the goſpel of his grace, and enable every one of you to ſay joyfully for yourſelves, "bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered; bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute ſin."

Finally, make full proof of your faith and knowledge of Chriſt, to yourſelves and others. Let the mercy, which ſaves, rule you. You muſt not think for the world that you belong to Chriſt, if you do not ſincerely purpoſe and endeavour, as

God

God ſhall enable you, to live unto him. We could not remove the curſe from ourſelves by payment to juſtice; that is Chriſt's work and not ours; and it is a vain thought in any man to ſuppoſe he can atone for his ſins by any works of his own. But if Chriſt has done it for us, and ſaved us from the wrath of God by his death, ſurely we have great obligations to him, and ſhould be ready to do any thing at his bidding; eſpecially, as he requires nothing of us but what is for our good, what he himſelf calls our *full* joy, and would make us all as happy as we can be in this world, if it was univerſally put in practice. Meekneſs and lowlineſs, patience and forgiveneſs of injuries, not in word only, but from the heart, ſobriety and purity, diligence and faithfulneſs in our callings, quietneſs in our families, truth and uprightneſs in our dealings, love of God and man, theſe are the works of faith, and the pleaſant fruits of the Spirit, and would make the earth a paradiſe.

Let us then attend to the voice which came from heaven, "this is my beloved Son, hear him;" as we ſhall, if we love him, and truly believe that he is our Saviour from ſin, death, and hell. If our faith is a true ſpiritual work, beginning in repentance, ſorrow for ſin, and a ſenſe of our being undone by it, and then caſting us upon Chriſt for help and deliverance, it will carry us on to obedience; it will make us devout worſhippers of God in public and private, pure in heart, and holy in all manner of converſation.

And

And without this we can have no other proof to give of our being in a ſtate of ſalvation. Faith we muſt have, and make it our refuge againſt the curſe of the law; but St. James will ſay to us, in agreement with all ſcripture, "ſhew it by thy works." We may value ourſelves upon our baptiſm, chriſtian name, and the ſlight performance of ſome outward acts of religion; but without a life of godlineſs, honeſty, ſobriety, diligence, peaceableneſs, and brotherly kindneſs, we know not what it is to be chriſtians, we are no better than baptized heathens, and muſt not perſuade ourſelves that we are in the way to heaven. The word of God which abideth for ever is, "without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord;" and we are renewed unto holineſs when we unfeignedly receive all his commands, and keep cloſe to him in prayer for ſtrength to do his will. So believe and ſo do, and then faith hath its perfect work, and you may ſay boldly on the warrant of all ſcripture, "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus."

BRITISH
24 DE 75
MUSEUM

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.